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CONTENTS

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RAVANCORE OF TO-DAY

(Reprinted from the Encyclopædia of the Madras Presidency and the Adjacent States).

BY

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"Jubilee Leaves," Coronation Leaves,"
"The Royal House of Travancore,"
etc., etc., etc.

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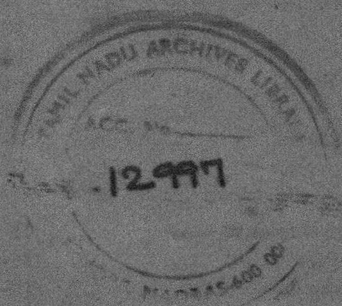
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THE EDITOR'S FOREWORD

Mr. S. Ramanath Aiyar, the author of this book, hardly needs introduction to the South Indian Literary world. His "Historical Sketch" of Travancore, published in 1903, before the State Manual came out, was a fitting introduction of this writer; and it was reviewed very favourably by the leading Indian and European scholars. This book was first published as an article in our Encyclopædia of the Madras Presidency and its adjacent States. To this article Mr. Ramanath Aiyar has added in this book one section on Literature and Art.

This book gives valuable information on modern Travancore, guided by the progressive spirit of its enlightened and sympathetic ruler. The book speaks for itself, and I take great pleasure in commending it to the reading public. Mr. Ramanath Aiyar's facile pen carries the reader's interest almost from cover to cover Our Company is obliged to Mr. Ramanath Aiyar for the cordial way in which he consented to write this article for us. It has really afforded me great pleasure to edit the article of this scholar in our Encyclopædia and this useful small book.

Cocanada and
Post Box 473,
MADRAS,
1st May 1920.

V. L. SASTRI,
Editor-in-Chief, the Oriental
Encyclopædic Publishing Co.

PREFACE

A scheme was organized by the Oriental Encyclopædic Publishing Company, Cocanada, for the publication of a series of Encyclopædic works with the object of creating an intelligent interest in India and the Indians—in India, by giving an accurate and all-round picture of the country, and in the Indians, by recording the biographies of notable persons who have contributed to its life and history. Their first work, the Encyclopædia of South India, including the Native States, has just been published. Dr. V. Gopaulkristna, M.D., the Managing Proprietor of the Company, wrote and asked me if I would write the article on the Travancore State. I readily consented and executed the work despite the pains and penalties of domestic life at the time, which I overlooked in view of the cause I was called upon to support.

The work now submitted is a reprint of my contribution to the Encyclopædia. It is a record and review of the country within reasonable limits and in a form interesting to the general reader. It is materially based on my larger work on Travancore, prepared and published by me at the instance of His Highness's Government, before the State Manual was issued. Section I deals with the country—Physical Features, Flora and Fauna and Sports. Section II treats of the people—their early movements, Peasantry, Military Class, Landed Aristocracy, Nobility, etc. Section III is devoted to religion—Hinduism in its threefold aspects, Mahomedanism, and Christianity. Section IV is concerned with Literature and Art. This section is an addition and does not find a place in my original article, since there is a separate article on

the subject in the Encyclopædia. Section V gives an account of Industries, Trade and Commerce. Section VI is an historical retrospect of the country.

The picture of Travancore of to-day, which the work presents, brings the narrative of events down to the celebration of the *Shashtiabdapurthi* of His Highness the Maharajah, who "fulfils the traditions of his illustrious Royal House and combines at once in his own person the virtues of an enlightened ruler and learned statesman, a patron of letters and promoter of science and arts." The book may be regarded as a memento of this unique event over which Travancore recently had its full share of rejoicings. A *postscript* is added to make the account up to date.

In conclusion, my best acknowledgments are due to the Oriental Encyclopædic Publishing Company for their kind response to reprint the article for me in this form in the readiest and most cordial fashion. I am particularly thankful to Mr. V. L. Sastri, B.A., the able Editor-in-Chief of the Encyclopædia, and Proprietor of the Oriental Encyclopædic Publishing Company, whose acknowledged scholarship and wide literary experience as the Chief Editor of such standard works of reference are a safe guarantee of good editorship.

Trivandrum,
Travancore,
1920.

S. RAMANATH AIYAR.

TRAVANCORE OF TO-DAY

I.

THE COUNTRY.

Physical Features.

Bounded and buttressed on one side by a series of mountains which break off into elevations of every variety, gradually sinking down westwards to the level of the low country; covered with abundance of superb forest; washed by very many large and fine rivers which, often expanding into lakes or lagoons, enrich the cocoanut gardens or the cultivated fields on their banks; and bordered on the other side by an extensive seaboard which affords many a safe roadstead for ships, the couutry presents diverse physical conditions which compel Nature to be boundlessly bountiful. It is the happy combination of these conditions that induced Lord Curzon, during his visit to this region, to declare that "in the whole of India, there is no State with greater fertility of resources, with more picturesque surroundings, with ampler opportunities for work, with richer prospects of development". Sir M. E. Grant Duff describes it as 'one of the fairest and most interesting realms that Asia has to show'; and Lord Connemara calls it 'a fairy land'.

Situation and Extent.

It is situated in the south-west extremity of the Madras Presidency, between latitudes 8·4' and 10·22' N. and

between longitudes 76·12' and 77·38' E. It is bounded on the north by the Cochin State and the Coimbatore District; on the east by the Madura and Tinnevelly Districts; and on the south and west by the Arabian Sea. The extreme length from north to south is 172 miles and its extreme breadth is 75 miles, the total area being 7,593 square miles according to the latest survey.

Name and Origin.

This interesting country was known under different names at different periods of its history. *Vanchi Desam* or the land of treasure; *Dharma Bhumi* or the land of charity; *Vanavarnad*, abridged into *Venad* or the land of celestials; *Tripapur* or the land of the bearers of the sacred feet; *Rama Rajyam* or the kingdom of Rama Raja; and *Kerala* or the land of cocoanut palms, are some of the names. Its ancient denomination is *Parasu Rama Kshetram.* This was associated with the tradition that Malabar (of which Travancore forms a part and with which it is homogeneous in origin, constitution and history) was reclaimed by Parasu Rama of the race of Bhrigu, the primeval patriarch of the Aryans. Of course the miraculous creation of the country by the hurling of his axe from Gokarna into the Southern Sea, is obviously a nature myth. In the records of the Geological Survey of India, Dr. King refers to an old marine terrace on the western side of India which must be of a later date than the Warkali beds. According to Ptolemy, the sea-coast ran along the eastern shore of the big Vembanad Lake. It has been proved that the bulk of the Shertala Taluk was of comparatively later formation. The action of the littoral currents in the seaward dissipation of the

mud-bank at Alleppey is said to have continued down to still later times. Under these circumstances, well may Parasu Rama's reclamation of Kerala rark as an allegorical representation of the natural phenomena. The present name of Travancore is the anglicized form of *Tiruvithancode*, which is a corruption of *Srivazumcode*, which in turn was the first indigenous modification of the Sanskrit *Srivardhanapuri*—the name which modern Padmanabhapuram, the ancient capital of the country, bore when it was founded by Parasu Rama.

Mountains.

In consequence of the peculiar formation of the country, one of the most marked features is the chain of mountains by which it is bounded on the east for about 200 miles, generally spoken of as an uninterrupted continuation of the Western Ghats. These are, however, separated by the Palghat Valley. The course of the mountains is very irregular. They break into hills of various heights. At several points they rise to an elevation of over 8,000 feet above the sea. The average altitude of these heights is 4,000 feet. The mountains bear different names in different parts. The northern portion is known as the High Range or the Anamalay. Its Sanskrit name is Gajasailam or the Elephant Hill. It has a remarkable rock two miles long and one-fourth of a mile in breadth. This is supposed to represent the elephant sent by a king of the Chola country to devastate and destroy the beautiful city of Madura. There is a ruined temple hewn out of a side of the rock, said to have been destroyed by Tippu Sultan. The chief summit of the Anamalay Range is called Anumudi. It is 8,000 feet

high, and has a climate similar to Ootacamund. Further south are the Cardamom Hills and the Peermade Plateau. In the former, cardamom grows abundantly, and the latter is called after the Mahomedan Saint, Peer Mahomed, who is said to have resided there. It is the centre of planting activity. It is largely resorted to by the Europeans who have taken up, for the purpose, Camp Gorge, Ponmudi, Ashambu, and other portions of the range. Beyond these, the range descends to the Shencottah Pass. Here it is only 800 feet high, but rises to 4,000 feet further south and stretches for over 60 miles. Its termination is Agastyakudom or the abode of Agastya. Its height is 9,150 feet and on this was built in 1854 an observatory under the direction of Mr. Brown. The southernmost peak of the Travancore Ghats is Mahendragiri—the hill from the summit of which Hanuman is said to have leapt over to Lanka.

Rivers.

Owing to its mountainous character, the country is washed by very many small and rapid rivers. They rise in the mountain slopes, take more or less a westerly or southerly direction, and discharge themselves into the sea either directly or through the lagoons. The bed of the rivers is frequently rocky at the elevated parts, but in most instances sandy as they approach the plains. The banks are near the Ghats precipitous, but get flatter and flatter as they quit the elevated parts. They are successively covered by verdant forests, groves of luxuriant vegetation or cultivated fields. The course of the rivers is winding, especially towards the coast, and the depth is on the average from 12 to 15 feet. With the beginning of the

Monsoon the rivers rapidly swell and spread without control; but they diminish with equal rapidity while the violence of the Monsoon draws to a close. By far the largest is the Periyar, as its name signifies. Its enormous volume of water is now diverted into Madura by the Periyar Water Works for which the Travancore Government has leased out to the British Government over 8,000 acres of land, above the river-line, for a consideration of 40,000 rupees. It is worthy of note that Mr. Nelson records, in his "Madura Manual," that this project was under contemplation 'even during the days of the Madura Naicks'. The Paralayar and the Kodayar are the most southern of the rivers which are wholly used up by means of dams in irrigating a vast extent of land.

Lakes.

The lakes may next be viewed. It will be seen that a succession of lagoons or backwaters extends along the coast and forms an important means of communication. "They enrich the neighbourhood, unite the distant parts and increase the value of the natural productions by the facility they give to carriage. The whole traffic of the western part of the country is done by them." The larger lakes are fed by the copious waters of innumerable rivers. The smaller ones are merely the expansions of the beds of rivers as they approach their mouths. The most important of the lakes have outlets into the sea. These outlets are often closed by bars of sand. When the Monsoon sets in, the water jumps impatiently from the beds of the lakes and either breaks through or flows over the bars.

The Vembanad is the largest lake in Travancore, being 32 miles long. Its extreme breadth is 9 miles. Its waters are swollen by the copious discharge of several large rivers into it. This lake passes along several taluks of the country. In some parts, the soundings show considerable depth; in other parts the lake is very shallow. It has a small island in the centre, known as the Patiramanal or the mysterious mound of midnight. It is filled with cocoanut plantations or luxuriant vegetation, and presents an infinitely charming appearance. It was, according to tradition, called into existence by the piety of a Namburi Brahmin who, while travelling, jumped out there into the lake to perform his religious rites at the appointed hour. The Kayamkulam Lake is 19 miles long and has wide expansions at both the extremities, into which the Cochin Canal from the north and the Quilon Canal from the south open. It has an outlet bar of the same name which admits small coasters from the Arabian Sea. This made Kayamkulam a place of considerable commercial importance during the days of Dutch influence in the 17th century. The Ashtamudi or the lake of 8 creeks lies near Quilon. It has also an outlet into the sea through the Nindakara Bar. Among small lakes may be mentioned the Parur Lake.

Roadsteads.

The Travancore coast is extensive. It begins at Cape Comorin and terminates about midway between Alleppey and Cochin. The coast is generally low and sandy, fringed with cocoanut palms. The sea-line is, however, interrupted by the precipitous rocks of Cape Comorin, the jutting promontories of Kadiapatanam and

Vilinjam, the rugged cliffs of Warkalai, the narrow reefs of Tangacherry, and by the wide mouths of several rivers. The town of Alleppey is the principal seaport of Travancore. It has the most remarkable haven of smooth calm water called the 'mud bay' by the early navigators. It is a place of considerable foreign trade and the head quarters of the Commercial Agent to the Travancore Government. Bartalomeo has put it on record that Alleppey was opened to foreign trade in A.D. 1762 and mentions the canal which runs parallel to the coast and backwater. It has a lighthouse 100 feet above the sea-level, visible seawards for 15 miles. The next important port is Quilon, a place of great commercial activity and of considerable historical importance. Close by, on the margin of the sea, lies the small port and British possession of Tangacherry which has a flagstaff. Anjengo is another small port midway between Quilon and Trivandrum. It will be interesting to English readers to learn that it was the birthplace of the great historian, Robert Orme, and the chief military depot on the west coast during the wars of the 18th century. It passed under the sway of the British in 1795 and still continues to be in their possession.

Trivandrum, the present capital of the State and the seat of the Residency, is the next place that affords a safe harbour. Further south is the small port of Colachel; lastly there is Cape Comorin, the southernmost extremity. It has a natural harbour which is a safe roadstead for ships during the Monsoons. Steps are being taken to develop it into a flourishing commercial port.

Climate.

It has been observed that the meteorological effects of the whole of India are in a small compass presented to us in Travancore. Among the chief of the different causes to which the peculiar climatic characteristics of Travancore are ascribed, may be mentioned the following:—(1) Its situation near the Equator, which makes it hotter than other regions; (2) its vicinity to the Indian Ocean, which prevents the air from becoming either too warm or too cold; and (3) the influence of the mountain ranges which shut off the land from the rest of India.

Rainfall.

The plentiful rainfall brought by the South west Monsoon is caught and deposited on the Travancore side only. This begins about the middle of Edavom and ends in Kanni. The showers are heavy; and frequent thunder and lightning prevail. The quantity of rain is less in the southern part of the land and increases along the sea line to the north. The north eastern parts are supplied with rain by the effects of the Monsoon in that direction. It was in 1836 that an observatory was established at Trivandrum on a hill about 200 feet above the level of the sea. The first meteorological observations were made by John Caldecott, the first Astronomer of Travancore. It was during the time of Mr. John Brown, his successor, that the most extensive observations were recorded. The average amount of rainfall varies in different places, being 58 inches at Cape Comorin, 73 at Trivandrum, and 94 at Quilon. The highest fall on record is in Peermad, where the maximum has gone up to 297 inches.

Winds.

The country has a constant flow of breeze. From Kumbhom to Kanni it blows from the west or north-west; and during other months it takes a more northerly direction. The Kumbhom-Kanni winds are laden with moisture and dissolve into rain in the mountainous parts. Mr. Bourdillon notes a peculiar case of saturation of air with moisture during the continuance of the rains. He says: "At Alleppey I have frequently noticed a difference of only half a degree between the wet and dry bulb thermometers". The direction of the sea-breeze is said to be from the north to the west, ultimately to the south-west, while that of the land winds is from the north-east and east. The sea-breeze sets in violently at times and lasts throughout the year. The land wind blows after sunset and continues till the next day noon. It blows rather violently at the entrance of the mountain passes. Through the Aramboly Pass the high wind rushes forth vehemently.

Flora.

Owing to the great abundance of moisture we find the country completely covered with trees or shrubs wherever it is not cleared for cultivation. The flora of the State is exceedingly rich and interesting. Mr. Bourdillon considers that there is a larger percentage of the land of this State under forests than in any European country or in the United States, and says that this peculiarity is undoubtedly due to the climatic conditions prevailing here, the abundant rainfall, the regular seasons and the equable and high temperature.

Floral Belts.

He divides the forest region into four classes, namely: 1. heavy moist forests of evergreen trees, 2. land originally covered with moist forest, but now overspread with trees of various ages, 3. deciduous forests with grass growing under the trees, and 4. rock and land covered with short grass and useless for any purpose except pasture. The flora of the first class exhibits an extraordinary variety of species and extends over the slopes of hills covering almost a third of the hill plateau.

In the floral belts described above, flourishes the aristocracy of noble trees which supply the most valuable timber, the best Indian fruits, and other valuable products. Teak, the monarch of the woods, is found in abundance. It thrives best on the western slope of the hills. About 8,000 logs are exported every year to countries beyond the confines of the Indian Empire. The beautiful Anjelley grows in open forests. The Cedar is found on the banks of the rivers. The Cinnamon, of which there are several varieties, is exceedingly common on hill slopes. The Ebony, which is much used for ornamental articles of furniture, is largely collected at the Shencottah Forest Depot. The Dammer and Nux Vomica, which rapidly attain a great size and give a cool shade, are widely distributed. The Banyan grows wild in the country, and is much planted for avenues alongside of the great southern road. The beautiful Laurel and the graceful Peepul are found everywhere. The Blackwood and the Persian Lilac, used much for furniture, rapidly grow up in the Ashambu Hills and the forest glades of Camp Gorge. Cotton grows everywhere from the sea-level up to three

thousand feet higher. Jack, which yields the most valuable timber, yields no less valuable fruit. The Mango is very plentiful and there are several varieties of it. The Gallnut and the Gooseberry are very common. Barring the timber and fruit trees, the Palm trees are the chief among the cultivated crops that contribute to the agricultural wealth of the country.

Pepper forms the chief source of agricultural wealth. It is well known that the pepper trade of Travancore dates back to Roman times, even much earlier. Within the last few years, Tapioca has been introduced and its cultivation has been so extended that it has also become a staple article of food with the masses. In the hills, the Cardamom, which was till quite recently a State monopoly, grows spontaneously in the shade of the forests. Coffee has been introduced within the last three or four decades but it does not prosper. Tea and Rubber take kindly to the soil. The European planters make fortunes out of these. Among other productions that constitute the agricultural flora, may be named the plantain, the pineapple, lime, pomegranate, sugarcane, guava, nutmeg, cloves, and other garden crops. It is not, therefore, too much to say that Travancore is the "Garden of India".

Fauna.

The mountains and forests of Travancore afford some of the best sport to be got anywhere in India, especially of 'large game'. There is an almost endless variety in the fauna, elephants and tigers for instance being so numerous in some parts that the hillmen are obliged to build their huts on tops of trees. Wild oxen and deer, monkeys, crocodiles, fishes, and insects also abound.

Game Limits.

The northern boundary of the field of game extends from Pyratumalai north-east, along the boundary between Travancore and Coimbatore, as far as the main stream of Paumbar, where the boundary turns southwards. Its eastern boundary runs from the main stream of Paumbar along the boundary between Travancore and British India southwards as far as the pass from Mlappara to Shivagiri, about 10 miles south of Kothamalai. Its southern boundary extends from the Shivagiri Pass on the east to the south-west, to the southernmost point of the Paradise Plateau. Its western boundary lies from northward along the edge of the cliffs to the Mount Plateau, known as Nallathannipara Plateau, and round its western edge to the Mount Estate and so along the edge of cliffs to the Granby Estate, the Arathu and the 42nd milestone cutting on the Peermade Road. Thence it extends to the north and includes Amarathamed and along the cliffs, Colahalamed , and again northward along the edge of the plateau as far as Nagrampara eastward including Palculamed to the junction of the Mothirapara River with Periyar, thence to Munnar on the High Range and thence including all land above 400 feet and running west of Anamudi along the western edge of Hamilton's Plateau and across the valley of Vyrathumalai.

This region has been justly called 'the paradise for sportsmen'. Sir John David Rees, a former British Resident, describes thus the unique character of the spot: "If the night spent on the way recall the Inferno, the days are those of Paradise when once the hills are reached, and the traveller rides through shady forest under a leaf-

canopy, only admitting the sunshine by infrequent shafts: every support of the lofty roof, a tall pillar tree with a green corinthian capital, festooned with vines and creeping plants, and the floor covered with an undergrowth of tree ferns, cycas and flowering shrubs or the graceful cardamom whose smooth glistening oblong leaves wave tremulously in light breezes, which hardly stir the firmer foliage of the trees. Above, black monkeys leap joyously from tree to tree; Malabar squirrels jump out, the yellow fur of their stomachs and the red fur of their backs gleaming in the sunshine which catches the taller trees; wood pigeons flit through the sylvan aisles; jungle fowls cackle; woodpeckers tap the tree trunks, and cicadæ shrilly whistle; and yet the general effect is one of silence. In the morning hours one might well call these forests the *Mysterious Temple of the Dawn*".

Game.

This includes bison, sambhur, ibex, mouse-deer, hares, deer, junglefowl, peafowl, quail, and such other birds. Along with other wild animals, elephants, whose ivory is a source of State revenue, are numerous, and tigers, leopards, bears, horned antelopes, porcupines and monkeys of varied species are common. Elephants are abundant all along the Western Ghats, especially on the Anamalai Hills, named so from that circumstance. They are captured and tamed by a Government establishment; sometimes taken in pitfalls dug for the purpose; sometimes driven into large enclosures called keddahs. They are largely used for the transport of timber from forests to river-banks. As a badge the elephant represents the Chera and the Chola Dynasties. It is the emblem of the Royal House of Travancore.

II.

THE PEOPLE.

Early Movements and Hill Tribes.

Of the original inhabitants we know very little. They have to be looked for among the hill tribes who are supposed to be the aborigines. They number between 8,000 and 10,000 persons, and are split up into 12 or 14 tribes, who dwell apart in isolated tracts. The Kanies inhabit the patches of forest about the basins of the rivers. The Pallars are found along the neighbouring woods of the Kulakada and the Atchencoil Rivers. The Malayadayars, called also Moodavanmars, frequent the hill-fastnesses of Nanattapara, Chengamanad, and Neriamangalam. The Hill Pandarams live in caves found along the mountain course of the Pamba. The Kochuvalens occupy the forest regions lying alongside of the Ranni. The Ulladans tenant the elevations round which winds the Palayi River. Along the foot of the hills from the Periyar to Thodupuzhai, the Arayans (known also as Vailanmars and often called Mala-Arayans or Lords of the Hills) are scattered in numerous camps. They and the Uralies in large numbers wander over the Thodupuzhai Hills, and were at an early date the property of the Alwancherry Thambrakal, the recognized chief of the later Numboori immigrants. The Cardamom Hills form the habitat of the Pallayars. The Mannans are most numerous on the hills east of the Periyar up to the foot of the High Range, while the slopes of the High Range contain the bulk of the Muthuvans.

Of these tribes the last three speak a language more akin to Tamil than Malayalam and freely intermarry with

the Tamils. They have probably immigrated from the Tamil country. Mr. Munro states that the Mannans are said to be descended from men of the Tamil country, and on certain days perform 'puja' to the tools of their ancestors. They claim superiority over the other tribes and are tall, sturdy and fair-featured.

The other tribes are all indigenous to the land. They are dark-skinned, short-nosed, thick-lipped and possess the worst features of all. Their ancestors probably betook themselves to the forest to escape from the yoke of slavery, under which their Pulaya brethren of the East Coast suffer even to this day. They speak Malayalam and are broken up into numerous units or kudies. They do not intermarry. Each village has its own headman. Among the Muthuvans and the Mannans, the leadership is hereditary. The produce of the wilderness and the spoils of the chase afford maintenance to the majority of them. Some, however, own patches of cultivated land and raise plantains, tapioca, yams, chillies, etc. They are excellent trackers, expert in clearing paths and invaluable guides to travellers. They are employed to gather honey, ivory, cardamoms, etc., for the forest depots. They are animists who assign to every grotto, herb or plant a spirit. They are afraid that these evil spirits may emerge out of darkness and swallow them up. On this ground many pieces of forest are left uncultivated.

The Cherumar.

Besides the jungle tribes who wander over mountains, those brought under predial bondage by the successive waves of later settlers go under the generic title of Cherumar. This class is represented by the Pulayas, the

Pariahs, the Vedans and the Ulladars, each of whom influenced by the prejudices of caste is split up into distinct clans. Though the yoke of hereditary slavery has been removed, they, as a class, still remain in a state of social degradation.

They constitute a distinct racial unit which has its own sub-divisions, its own traditions, and its own jealou·y of the encroachment of other low castes. They are by occupation the industrious and faithful servants of the Nair agriculturists. They live in scattered dwellings and are left wholly to Nature. The Christian missionaries were the first to admit them to equal rights and privileges with the other classes of the population in their schools and churches.

The Chovas.

The first immigrants brought with them the palm tree. They bear different names in different parts of the country. In South Travancore and on the other side of the Ghats they go under the name of Shanars. In Central Travancore they are known as Ilavas; in North Trvancore as Choganmars; in Malabar as Tiyyas; and in South Canara as Bilwas, a slightly modified form of the term Ilava. Their name is commonly derived from a root meaning an island; and the common tradition is that they came to the West Coast from Ceylon. Mr. Stewart, the Superintendent of the Madras Census of 1891, thin that 'probably the connecting link between the wo 'Dweepam' and 'Tiyya,' survives in the caste na 'Divas,' which is returned from South Canara. support of this theory Dr. Caldwell, the great missiona scholar of South India, observes that the general a

natural course of migration would doubtless be from the mainland to the island; but there might occasionally have been reflex waves of migration even in the earliest times, as there certainly were later on. Traces of these migrations survive in the existence in Tinnevelly and on the West Coast of castes whose traditions, and, in some instances, even whose names connect them with Ceylon. Their hereditary occupation is palm-cultivation and toddy-drawing. The majority of them confine themselves to the labour appointed to the race; but a considerable number has taken to agriculture or trade. They reduced the remnants of the vanquished aboriginal tribes to slavery.

The Dravidian demonolatry is retained by them. Of all the Indian tribes, they have given the largest number of converts to Christianity. They are a hard-working and industrious people and form the best type of the peasant population. They now form a solid community which has by strenuous efforts been released from the bondage of centuries. Large numbers of them now possess a fairly good culture; and we find among them authors, editors, doctors, and Government servants of the country.

The Nairs.

They formed the military nobility of the land. They were hereditary warriors. In former times each petty Rajah ruled his own portion of the territory designated a Naud, and he was named Naduvazhi, who had at least 100 Nairs under him. Next in rank were some other still smaller rulers called Desavazhi (the military chief of a Desam). Archery and swordsmanship were taught

to every Nair. Every Nair of a certain age was bound to undergo training in arms and serve as a soldier. This process of training is called *Adavu* and each batch of the class consists of 200 men. Such batches were numerous. The system of training is known as *Kalari,* which obtains here and there to the present day. Seventy-two families of Madambimars appear to have played a conspicuons part in promulgating this system. Under them the practice of archery was not only greatly improved, but generally diffused throughout the country. To the Madambai belongs the right of tying the *Thali* during the marriages in every Nair house situated within his Kara. There is quite a mass of historic and contemporary evidence in support of their

Military Efficiency.

The famous traveller Ibn Batuta, who was the chief judge of the court of Mahomed Toghlak at Delhi and who visited Quilon owing to a shipwreck, says :—

"In the country of Malabar are twelve kings, the greatest of whom has 50,000 troops at his command, the least 5,000 or thereabout. That which separates the district of one king from that of another is a wooden gate upon which is written 'The gate of safety—such a one'" (A. D. 1325).

Alphonso Albuquerque, the Portuguese conquerer, who came to Quilon in 1503 and established a factory there, says :—

"The King of Coulao was a very honest man and very gallant and in the war which he carried on with the King

of Narasinga who had many soldiers, both horse and foot, he attacked with 60,000 archers and overcame him".

In the calendar of State papers (Colonial Series, 1513-1516, edited by Saintsbury) reference is made to the great war the Portuguese had with the Queen of the Kupakas, a war in which the Nair army played a prominent part. Van Rheed, the Dutch Governor of Quilon, refers to the Princess of Attingal as being in close alliance with the Honble E. I. Company and always able with her armed force to make the foes flee before her. In 1661 six thousand native troops took part in opposing the Dutch Admiral Van Goens at Purakad, where the bombardment lasted for 14 days Captain John Nieuhoff, in describing his visit to the Queen of Quilon, refers to the chief commander of the troops, Martanda Pillai (Matta de Pulo), and says that the queen had a guard of 100 Nair soldiers, all clad after the Malabar fashion. Referring to the king, he says that the sovereign prince is very large of body and of a stern countenance and that he keeps constantly 1,200 Nair soldiers in pay. His residence is surrounded with an earthen wall 20 feet high.

So late as the 18th century there were with the Maha Rajah Rama Varma, a hundred thousand soldiers—Nairs armed with bows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The Meenachil relics show that the Kutanaud Rajah, who governed it then, had under him 16 Madambimars, who formed his military council. The descendants of the Awalur Panicker, the commander of the forces at Aryad, still draw a pension from the Government. The Alwaye archives disclose that Pular Kat Kaimal, Chennat Padanair and Kalathil Kartha were the military leaders at the time.

We have in the Vela Kali a survival of the ancient fight and the ancient military costume of the Nairs. The Onam combats are the relics of their military ardour, and the military chief was bound to assemble the Nairs of his district every year to exhibit a mock combat with those of another district in the presence of the rajah. The combats, in which well-trained pugilists took part, were either in the nature of duels or of faction fights. Fr. Bartolomeo, who lived and wrote at the end of the 18th century, says: "The men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into two parties and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted but exceedingly strong and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans." This is borne out by James Forbes also in his "Oriental Memoirs." Mr. Johnson, in his "Relation of the Most Famous Kingdom in the World," eulogizes the Nairs as ready soldiers and says:—

"Their continual delight is in their weapons and in their persuading themselves that no nation goeth beyond them in skill and dexterity." The British General, Sir Hector Munro, has placed it on record that "they point their guns well and fire them well also,". though latterly, as Mr. Logan laments, the martial spirit of the Nairs in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. Hence it is that the duties of the present-day Nair Brigade, a remnant of the army disbanded after the insurrection of A. D. 1808, consist in guarding forts, palaces, treasuries, jails, pagodas, stores, and cutcherries; in assisting civil officers in repressing riots or tumults; and in furnishing escorts for the members of the royal

family and on public and State occasions. Thus it will be seen that till about a hundred years ago the Nairs were essentially military.

The following extract from an old Vattezhuttu document describes the appearance and apparel of the Nairs : "Long beard and moustaches, forehead besmeared with ashes, cloth worn as *Palathar* (the lower end being drawn backwards between the thighs and fastened to the hinder part of the waist), one piece of cloth worn above the *Palathar*, wooden sandals, long hair, grave speech, broad chest, strong physique, long stout arms, able to shatter the furious lion's skull and ever prepared to fight. Thou, Oh ! *Nakuthan*, art the personification of hardy might."

Dravidian Affinity.

Several old Malayalam writings show that Nair women wore the *Pambadam*—a kind of ear ornament which marks out the Dravidian womenfolk on the other side of the Ghats. In North Travancore, a colony of Nairs, who call themselves Tamil Sudras, survives to this day and serves to show in every respect the intermediate stage in the fusion of manners and customs from which the present-day life of the Nairs has evolved. The evidence from language as to the race movement accords with this Dravidian affinity. The Vattezhuttu or Original Tamil Alphabet was used throughout the peninsula south of Tanjore including South Malabar and Travancore. Till about the end of the 17th century it was in general use. The substantial identity of old Malayalam with old Tamil has been proved by the ancient inscriptions in Travancore and Cochin. The folk-song poetry also indicates the direction from the South. From the primitive specimens

of the Nairs, from their costume and customs, from the identity of language, from even the survival of patriarchy, as in the case of the Tamil Sudras alluded to above, and from numerous other circumstances, the probability of the Nairs having formed part of the Dravidian community in the plains is preponderating. They are Dravidian in the sense that there is no extraneous influence over them other than that of latter-day civilization and institutions.

They are serpent-worshippers; they hold serpents in great veneration, and a corner of the compound of every wealthy Taravaud is set apart for their abode. There are thousands of such groves or *Kavus* in the country, and the worship of the serpent gods, deemed necessary for the affluence and prosperity of the household, obtains to the present day. Within the limits of this sacred grove, serpent idols are put up on a stone basement called *Chitrakudam*, built for the purpose. These idols are propitiated with periodical offerings by the eldest female member of the house. On such occasions the Valluvar or the Kurup sings and dances.

Taravaud.

This is the name which denotes the system of their domestic life. Any number of private families may be comprised in a Taravaud. Every member of a Taravaud has an equal share in the common stock—the infant as much as the aged—as has been noted in the Ethnology section of this Encyclopædia. No member can claim his share, but the Taravaud as a body can make such division as it pleases of the common stock. When partition takes place, the Taravaud becomes split up into as many

Taravauds as the members may have arranged to form among themselves. In the Taravaud the entire property is managed by its senior member or Karnavan for the benefit of the whole family. He becomes its head by birth and resembles the father of a Brahmin family in respect of his rights and obligations. He has equal interest with the other members and is the guardian and representative of the property of every member within the Taravaud. He should decide what family ceremonies are necessary. He cannot renounce his rights and, as the head of the family, has entire control over the property. He may assign it for maintenance. He may delegate and resume its management. He may resume property allotted for maintenance, or before proceeding otherwise he may narrow his rights. He can hold private property, but cannot alienate the Taravaud property without the consent of the other members. He is removable for mismanagement, for extravagance, for disregarding the family interests or for incapacity, but not for any single act of misfeasance. If removed, he is eligible for maintenance by the Taravaud.

All Taravauds follow the Marumakkathayam law of inheritance, by which, though the property is held in theory to vest in the females only, the males and females have equal rights. Practically the males are co-sharers with the females. Under this a man's property goes to his sisters, sister's sons, sister's daughters, mother, mother's sisters, their children, maternal grandmother, her sisters, and their children. This system owes its origin, among other things, to the constitution and condition of the Nair society in the early times, to the peculiar system of land

tenure then in vogue, and to the genius of the government of the ancient rajahs. Mr. Logan says that this system was adopted to prevent alienation of property. Certainly there is much to commend itself in the prevention of the alienation of property brought about by the system; but that was only an effect that followed from it and not the cause of the arrangement. Mr. Logan himself adds:—"The system has also much to commend itself in a society organized, as it then was, when the Nairs were the protectors of the State and could seldom, except in old age, settle down to manage their own affairs." The Nair community is sub-divided into a number of castes and sub-castes, such as *Kireathill* Nair or the house steward, who held, in times of yore, high offices in the civil and military services of the country, the *Illakkar* or tenants attached to Brahmin Illoms, the *Sorubhakar* rendering feudal service in Kshatriya families, the *Padanair* or the warrior clan, the *Manavalan* or the agriculturist branch, and the *Pullichanair* or the bearers of the palanquins of the princes and chiefs. It is encouraging to find that, notwithstanding such innumerable social and racial barriers, the community as a whole is adapting itself, with remarkable alacrity, to the altered conditions engendered by contact with the progressive civilization of the West.

The Malabar Brahmins or the Nambudris.

They form the foremost landed aristocracy. They are the first Brahmin colonists with whom Parasu Rama is said to have peopled the land of his reclamation. The Parasu Rama tradition about the social and political organization of the country is preserved in Sahyadri Khandam of the

Skanda Purana, in the Sankara Smrithi which is the great Teacher's epitome of Bhargava Smrithi or the ordinances of Bhargava or Parasu Rama and in the *Kerala Mahatmyam, Kerala Oolpathi* and other works. The heroic figure of Parasu Rama has continued to inspire literary men down to our own times, and it is a remarkable fact that the deeds of the sworn enemy of the Kshatriyas form the subjection of *Parasu Rama Vijayam* by a leading Kshatriya who, by the qualities of his genius, is known as the *Kerala Kalidasà.*

As a common inheritance of the people, the tradition has passed into their every-day life. Even allowing for what the critics of the tradition desire, the fact remains that Parasu Rama is a profound reality. Parasu Rama's campaigns against the Kshatriyas probably signalize the struggle between the Church and the State which has arisen everywhere in the early history of the world. In Europe, the State got the better of the Church, while in India, the Church got the better of the State. Hence, the supremacy of the priests came to be established. It is quite in keeping with the historical trend of events that the Brahmins, headed by Parasu Rama, became early settlers in the new-found land. Whether it was made a gift of or not, it is very clear that the Brahmins acquired their title by occupation according to the idea propounded by Manu in the following words:—"Sages who know former times nounce cultivated lands to be the property of him who away the wood or who cleared and tilled it." There apparently none to compete with the powerful priestly for the lordship of the land. And if their ecclesiastical nits prevented them from taking to the plough, the

condition of society at the time largely favoured the utilization of the services of other classes of people as their tenants-at-will.

In their statistical memoirs, Messrs. Ward and Conner truly observe that if Kerala was not created for the priesthood, it was at least early adjudged to their obedience. Mr. R C. Dutt says:—"Still further rolled away the waves of Aryan influence and the country beyond the Krishna River received Aryan civilization and religion. Three kingdoms—those of the Cholas, the Cheras and the Pandyas—had arisen in the extreme south of India several centuries before the christian era." Prof. McCrindle avers:—"The Brahmins of South India appear in those days to have consisted of a number of communities settled n separate parts of the country and independent of each other." This, as Lassen remarks, is in harmony with the tradition, according to which the Aryan Brahmins were represented as having been settled by Parasu Rama in 64 villages. It is to the inhabitants of one of these villages that Loudovic di Varthema, who left Europe for India in 1502, refers when he writes:—"The first class of pagans in Calicut are called Brahmins. The second Naeri (Nairs)."

Modern Chenganoor was the southernmost of the 64 villages into which Kerala was divided at the time of Parasu Rama. After the fall of the *Rakshapurusha* or protectorate, it was governed by 18 rich Brahmin jenmis. In those days all the lands were owned by the Brahmin jenmis and some of them, like the Edamana Pandarathrll, had territorial control, as manifest from their writs which conclude with "*Desadipathi* so and so".

In these circumstances, it is absurd to ignore the Brahmin inroad under Parasu Rama, which influenced society and religion and changed the course of progress in diverse ways. However apocryphal Parasu Rama's gift of lands to the Namburis ..., we have authentic records of gifts of lands to them by the reigning sovereigns. Down recently, as on the 27th Chingom ... M. E., the Maha Rajah issued a Royal *Neet* making a gift of considerable landed properties to the Namburis of Cheppuram, ...ru-manam and Irinjalakkuda gramams. The gifts comprised not merely lands but also dignities and offices. This shows how the spirit of the Parasu Rama tradition has not been lost in the policy of the latter-day rulers.

The Namburis soon founded villages and temples and began to exercise great influence at the Court of the Malabar kings. In the early history of the Namburi caste we find a division into two parties, namely, the Punniyur congregation, following the Vaishnavite faith, and the Chovur faction, adopting that of Siva. The latter finally prevailed and has since been incorporated with the Vedanta doctrine of Sankaracharya, himself believed to have been a Namburi. The organization of the Namburis is by gramas or villages, as that of Nairs is by taras or lands. The Namburi community of the present day is split up into two religious factions, namely, the Tirunavai group and the Trichur league, each presided over by a *Vadyar* or high priest. The highest order of the Namburis is called the Namburipad, or one who has performed a public sacrifice. The illustrious house of Alavancherry Tamprakel stands foremost in rank and exercises even now the right of ministration on the

coronation day of the rulers of Travancore and Cochin. Eight such families of religious reputation exist to this day under the name of Ashtagrahtil Adhy... Besides these there are certain classes of N...mburis who have forfeited their original status .. account of their having pursued callings inde...ent of the study of the Vedas. Such are the ...ysician Namburis known as Ashtagraha Vaidya... eight families of physicians, who, having from ...ent times devoted themselves to the study of medicine, are recognized and resorted to by the people as hereditary physicians. Such are again the soldier Namburis called Sasthrangakars, who constituted the ancient militia of 3,600 men named the Rakshapurushas or protectors of the realm. The *Sasthrakali* or performance with swords and shields obtains to this day. Such are also the Sankethika Namburis who, not prepared for the initial troubles incidental to colonization, went back to the land they came from, but returned when order was restored and peace began to reign. Under this class are included the Tiruvella Desis or those who betook themselves to the place of that name and the Karnat and Tulu Desis, who immigrated to the southern districts. These are some of the main divisions of the Namburi classes of to-day.

Sir Seshaiah Sastri hits off most happily the leading traits of this class of people when he writes :—"The proud Namburi Brahmin landlord, who traces his ancestry and tenure through several thousands of years and whose anxiety to preserve the dignity of the family is indicated by the strict law of entail by which the disintegration of his property is prevented, is yet a victim of indebtedness caused chiefly as elsewhere by the variously expensive

character of the marriage of his daughter and by his unbounded charity and hospitality."

The Namburis are extensive landowners, often of immense wealth. The family property is owned and enjoyed in common by all the members of the family. Division of the family property is forbidden. It is rarely or never practised. The law of inheritance is *Makkathayam*, by which the sons are the legal heirs of a man's property. The eldest son inherits the father's wealth. Others merely claim support from him. Those who can claim such support are the males of the family, their wives, their virgin daughters, and widows while residing in the house. Owing to the expensive character of marriage, which is due to the practice of making large endowments to the bridegroom as well as to the anxiety to let the property pass undivided, the eldest son alone is allowed to marry. If he be without issue he may marry one or two additional wives. If the eldest brother still have no children or die without issue, the next in succession may marry, and so on. When the family is in danger of extinction, it is the common practice to give the daughter of the house in marriage to a Namburi and to take him into the *Illom*, which is the name of the Namburi's house. This is known as Saravasvadham marriage, according to which the whole estate of the father-in-law passes after his death to the management of his son-in-law. He is not entitled to any property, if he fails to beget any issue. This is peculiar to Namburis alone. Adoption is also made to perpetuate a Namburi family in the following three ways :—

1. 'Pattukayyil' adoption, or one in which five persons take part; 2. 'Chamathu' adoption, in which a

pan of sacred twigs of the *Ficus Religiosa* is burnt; and 3. 'Koodivachu' adoption, in which a surviving widow or an old man adopts an heir by merely taking him to the house. Mr. J. D Mayne says that the last form of adoption obtains in the Mithila country under the name of *Krithrima* adoption. The women of the Namburis are called Antharjanams or inside folks and are guarded with jealousy. The institution of caste investigation or a court of inquiry in case of adultery, the terrible method of pronouncing sentence against an adulteress, the disposal of children after a guilty career, the ordeal that suspected persons have to undergo, and their loss of caste and social position point to a very severe phase of their social peculiarities. The adoption of the front tuft, the celebration of the Samavartanam at a late age, the introduction of a peculiar intonation in the recitation of the Veda, the wearing of a single *Yagnopavitam* instead of two as the outward emblem of a married man, the option of all sons save the eldest to marry or not, the sufficiency of feeding a single Brahmin instead of two at the *Sraddham*, are a few of their peculiar observances which mark them out from the Brahmins of the East Coast. And yet, in the words of the State Manual, the marrying after puberty, the keeping of the hair and the putting on of the sandal paste caste-marks on the forehead by the widows, the wearing of white cloths among husband-living women, the marrying on Saturdays, the fixing of a *Muhurtham* (auspicious hour) for the *Sanchayanam* and other practices of the Malabar colonists to-day represent an epoch of history in the old country now quite forgotten.

In the following fervent wish of Mr. Fawcett about these Brahmins expressed in the Madras Museum Bulletin, all may therefore join :—

"Long may they remain as they are, untouched by what we hear called 'progress', but which is really *change*—for the better or worse, who knows? Long may they be what they are, *the only undisturbed vestiges of Vedic Brahminism.*"

The Census figures show a decline in their numerical strength: and what is worse, this tendency to decline is seen in their material condition too. Whatever the cause, the latest verdict is as follows:—"During the past two decades they have executed as many as 2,736 Kanapattam documents involving about 8,000 acres of land, which till then remained inalienated, while they have heavily encumbered jenmam lands covering an area of about 6,000 acres, and absolutely parted with their rights over 1,500 acres approximately. The total amount of indebtedness, excluding Kanam transactions, may be estimated at about 10 lacs of rupees." This may not be much when compared with the capitalized wealth of their estates in the country. All the same, it behoves these Namburis, who have been landlords of great antiquity, to bestir themselves and make every endeavour to cease to be the victims of such indebtedness.

The Koil Thamburans.

The local Kshatriya nobility—these are the offspring of Namburi Brahmins by Kshatriya women. It was a Koil Thampuran of Thattari Koilagam who brought two princesses to Travancore in 856 M. E. These princesses were shortly afterwards adopted into the royal house.

One of them gave birth to the great rajah, Marthanda Varma, to whom the country owes its present territorial extent. It was only after the grant of the Kilimanur estate in 903 M. E. to the members of the Koil Thampuran's family in recognition of his meritorious services, that the Thattari Koilagam finally established itself in Travancore. From the time of Rajah Marthanda Varma down to the regency of Parvathi Rani, all the sovereigns of Travancore were descended from the Koil Thampurans of Kilimanur. The other families of Koil Thampurans entered Travancore as refugees during the invasion of Malabar by the Mysore tyrants. Rama Varma Rajah, who reigned in Travancore at that time, most magnanimously received them into his protection.

The Thampurans or Rajahs.

The offspring of Koil Thampurans by Kshatriya women are the rajahs. At the time of the conquest of Travancore the petty rajahs were all deposed and pensioned. The descendants of these rajahs can be seen throughout North Travancore. They live in seven distinct families of innocent and gentle nobles, of which some alone, as those at Mavelikarai, are in good and tolerably affluent circumstances. But the condition of the majority of them is not much better than that of their plebian neighbours, from whom they still love to exact all the formalities and the ceremonies of Court. Those who cast off their supposed position in society and do not think it beneath their dignity to associate themselves with the common people and study in the ordinary schools and colleges, have come off gloriously and are filling with credit

places of responsibility both in Travancore and in British India.

The East Coast or Non-Malayala Brahmins.

The orthodox piety of a long line of maharajahs inspired by the traditions of the past is responsible for the exodus of this class of Brahmins. As custodians of and experts in the Vedic literature and religious rites, these were invited for spiritual purposes. The palace purohit and pandit known as *Dikshitar* or chaplain and the Vedic reciters, who follow the maharajah for service in the temple, represent the class of people brought down for religious purposes.

Unlike the Namburis these later arrivals retain intact all the characteristics peculiar to the Aryan type of which they are the true representatives. If Parasu Rama's gift of land to the earlier immigrants be apocryphal, Rama Rajah's gift of lands to these later colonists furnishes its authentic sequel in modern times. The royal writ of 25th Makaram 928 M E. relates to the gifts of lands and appurtenances to the Brahmins at Mahadanapuram. The royal writ of 4th Puratasi 940 M.E. records the grant of lands as danam to the Brahmins to settle themselves in Asramom. According to the royal writ dated 8th Puratasi 949 M. E. lands were granted as *artha danam* to the Brahmin villagers of Parvathipuram. An order of 1004 M. E. records that it was not usual to levy any tax on house-sites in Brahmin villages. The *Brahmadayom* and *Bhattavrithi* tenures in the Shencottah Taluk prove likewise the genesis of these Pandy Brahmin colonists. The king's gifts were

confined only to the learned pundits who visited his Court or to purohits who led pure lives of piety and sanctity. There is nothing phenomenal or class-favouring in such gifts. For, gifts of lands have been made even to the Christian missionaries for educational and medical purposes. The acts of gift, therefore, reflect only the spirit of the times in the encouragement of everything meritorious. The tradition of the Namburi Raksha-purushas or protectors of the realm reclaimed by Parasu Rama finds and furnishes its historical parallel in the creation of modern Travancore by the efforts of these people.

In the words of the State Manual: "Travancore owes its present high position to the courage, ability and fidelity of many East Coast Brahmins in the past." Their work in Travancore forms an integral portion of its modern history and will be properly treated under that head.

Such are some of the leading layers that make up society in this ancient land. The heterogeneous elements that interpose them and compose their different sub-divisions are determined on the caste basis of religion and will therefore be referred to under that head. The non-Hindu section of the people will likewise be dealt with in the sections on Christianity and Mahomedanism.

III.

RELIGION.

The principal religions of the people are Hinduism, Christianity, and Mahomedanism.

Hinduism.

The bulk of the people profess Hindusim, which is the State religion. The dedication of the whole State by

the great Martanda Varma in 925 M.E. to Sri Padmanabha, the guardian god of the land, and the assumption of sovereignty by him as Sree Padmanabha Dasa or the viceregent of the deity, (a title retained to the present day) afford a striking proof of the State being subordinate to the Church. In connection with the annual *ootsavam* or festivity celebrated in that memorable shrine of national service, we have a symbolical and concrete illustration of the above, when the maharajah with the sword of fealty in hand leads the *aurat* procession attended by the officers of State and others. Even to-day the popular belief is that a portion of the Vishnu Kalai or the halo of divine Vishnu hedges round the king.

In Travancore, the work of Hinduism is threefold. Its religio-social influence has given rise to the caste organization of the people. The purely religious aspect of it deals with the maintenance of the State Church and attempts to solve the problem of death and after. Under its socio-religious aspect, it has organized a system of charity, private, State-aided as well as State-assumed and has so far successfully grappled with the problem of the poor.

Caste Organization.

With reference to the caste organization Mr. Wilson says in his work on Indian castes that "the system of caste was not the growth of a single age or even a few centuries," and adds "pride of ancestry of family and personal position and occupation and of the religious preeminence, which is the ground characteristic of caste, is not peculiar to India." According to Auguste Comte,

the spirit of caste is a mere extension of the family spirit. Sir Henry Cotton considers that it is the existing basis of social order. No doubt, as observed by Sir W. W. Hunter, there is plasticity as well as rigidity in caste—the one enabling caste to adapt itself to widely separated stages of social progress and to incorporate the various ethnical elements, and the other giving strength and permanence to the corporate body thus formed.

De La Mazeliere appreciatingly observes: "Hinduism protects the lowest as well as the highest castes; it protects them politically in checking the tyranny of kings; it protects them socially in giving the lowest a society of equals; it protects them economically in securing to each one the monopoly of its trade against the pretensions of all the other castes, even of Brahmins and of kings." Sister Nivedita feelingly exclaims, therefore: "Caste is race continuity; it is the historic sense; it is the dignity of tradition and of purpose for the future."

We have in Travancore over 1.000 sub-division of castes, which may be grouped under 72 principal divisions—8 of Brahmins, 2 of Nanajatis, 12 of Antaralajatis, 18 of Sudras, 6 of Artisans, 10 of Pattitajatid 8 of Nichajatis, and 8 of extra jatis. It is not intendes, to encumber this portion with the enumeration of the different castes, or the explanation of their exclusive traits.

In the words of an Indian writer: "As the society now stands, with castes multiplied almost indefinitely, the place due to each community is not easily dis-

tinguishable; nor is any common principle of precedence recognized by the people themselves by which to grade the castes Excepting the Brahmins at one and the admittedly degraded castes at the other, the members of the large proportion of the intermediate castes think, or profess to think, that their caste is better than that of their neighbours and should be ranked accordingly. Even in the case of the Brahmins, the ground is not altogether undisputed."

Devaswoms or Religious Institutions.

Hinduism, as observed before, is a religious confederacy. It represents the coalition of the Vedic Brahminism with the ruder rites of the lower castes and tribes. It is a religious federation based on worship. As the various race elements have been moulded into castes, so the old beliefs and religious elements have been worked up into gods. Hence, we find the pagodas in the country divided into two classes, those dedicated to superior divinities, and those dedicated to inferior divinities. There are 6,159 pagodas of the former kind and 3,205 of the latter out of a total of 9,364 in the Travancore State. The higher castes of Hinduism worship the higher divinity. Of the temples some are under Government management, whilst the rest belong to corporations called Ooranmakars. These are of four classes: (1) ancient temples said to have been founded by Parasu Rama, (2) temples founded by rajahs, (3) temples founded by communities or leading individuals, and (4) temples founded by sannyasis or ascetics. The manager of a temple of the first two kinds is called

Devaradi Ooralen, or manager subordinate to the deity, while in the last two classes he is called Ooraladi Devan. These are institutions of a bygone age.

Mr. Nagam Aiya puts down 83 per cent. of these institutions as outside Government management. He says: "The property owned by these 7,758 temples is also vast. According to the settlement of 1012 M. E., which comprised only a settlement of garden lands, these private devaswoms owned 54,155 gardens tax-free. The temples within the boundaries of Adhigara Olivu and Desa Olivu tracts are excluded from this calculation. The assessed rental of these 54,155 gardens came to Rs. 79,195. It can be safely estimated that the present assessment on them will come to 1½ lacs of rupees. Multiplying this sum by 25, we get the figure 37 lacs of rupees, the capitalized value of those gardens. The paddy lands of the same may be estimated to be worth about sixty lacs of rupees. In all, the landed properties of the devaswoms may be put down as worth one crore of rupees. The movables of these temples may be valued at 1/6 of a crore, excluding the buildings, almost all of which are in different stages of decay throughout the country. These are the properties known to the public accounts before 1012 M. E Properties purchased since then, in the name of these temples, and properties dedicated to them or to other charities before that date, if paying Sirkar tax, cannot be discovered from the Sirkar accounts. It may not be far wrong, if I estimate the total value at 2 crores of rupees." The picture of capitalized wealth presented by Mr. Nagam Aiya is by no means an overdrawn one.

Religious and Charitable Institutions.

The charitable institutions are partly connected with the temples and are mainly the outcome of charitable endowments. Dewan Seshaiah Sastri places it on record that there are forty-five such institutions throughout the State, that the chief one is at the capital, known as Agrasala; that it is a very large institution of its kind and there is probably not the like of it in India, the arrangements for supplies of stores, and for cooking and serving being perfect and self-acting as it were; that the building forms an annexure of the great pagoda, in the extensive corridors and galleries of which the actual feeding daily takes place; and that the others are at convenient spots on the line of the road commencing from the Aramboli Pass in the south and ending at Parur in the north. Besides these oottupuras, temples also offer free fare.

Both Brahmins and Nairs have alike set apart extensive estates for the purpose. With a view to add to these endowments, and place them on a better footing, the benevolence of the great maharajahs led to the assumption of lands belonging to these institutions and their management under State control. The endowments were far in excess of the aggregate actual expenses, and the State became a decided gainer by the bargain. But it goes with
Government
out saying that it is a great trust th[illegible]
have solemnly undertaken to fulfil, and are therefore
bound to faithfully discharge to the very end. It will be
useful to call some eminent witnesses who have expressed
themselves in favour of the position advanced.

Mr. Shungunni Menon, of the "Travancore History" fame, says:— "Velu Thampi observing the various

devaswoms in Travancore, the large estates each possessed and the remarkable influence of the devaswoms over the people, contemplated the assumption of the whole and the annexation of the estate to the Sirkar, hoping by these means to neutralize, if not totally destroy, the influence of the devaswoms over the people, and thus check any future commotions there might arise. On Colonel Munro being informed of this, he thought it important enough to be worthy of adoption. This measure was also the means of causing a permanent additional revenue to the State, for, after meeting the expenses of the various devaswoms, it left a good margin in favour of the Sirkar."

That model minister, Sir Seshaiah Sastri, says: "The revenues of the lands belonging to this pagoda which have been acquired from remote times by gifts amount to Rs. 75,000 and go to defray the expenses of the institution, any surplus being credited to the State treasury and any deficit, very rare, being made good from it." He continues:—"The State had no concern with the management of any temples before 987 M. E., when the landed property of 378 temples was assumed by the State and the management taken over. The other minor temples, 1,171 in number, which had no property, were also assumed either before or after that date." He adds: "The interest of Government in respect of these institutions is, for the most part, only that of a trustee, and even were it otherwise, this State will be bound, as every other country in the world does, to maintain a church establishment out of public revenue."

In a memorandum submitted to the Resident, Dewan Krishna Row says:—"It is beyond doubt that all

pagodas were maintained by the inhabitants themselves previous to their assumption by the Sirkar in 987 M E. (A.D. 1811-12). Bequests were sometimes made by the inhabitants of their property to the pagodas. These pagodas had formerly lands of their own, the revenue of which maintained them, but which were since assumed by the Sirkar." He points out elsewhere that "these lands, which belonged to the pagodas, were leased out to ryots on Sirkar pattom."

Again, Dewan Nanoo Pillai, after carefully and thoroughly going into the subject, has, with commendable impartiality and independence, distinctly given his support to the above situation. He says: "These lands were endowments offered to temples by votaries, which from small beginnings multiplied to an enormous extent" He goes on to state that, "with a view to emancipate the devaswom tenants from the oppression to which they were subject and under which they had been groaning for years and to secure addition to the public revenue, the influential devaswoms of the country with their vast endowments were assumed and managed by the State since 987 M.E."

We have lastly the most important testimony of Sir T. Madhava Rao, who says:—"These institutions were doubtless in vigorous existence when Travancore conquered or acquired the several little principalities, which diver- d the territories north of the Warkalai barriers. And n these territories passed under the domination of vancore, the religious and charitable institutions were intained intact. I find that the Rajahs of Parur and lengad, when they ceded their right of sovereignty to

Travancore by treaty, expressly stipulated for the due protection and perpetuation of the foundations of charity and piety which existed at the time in their principalities. And apart from such obligations, the maharajahs, as sovereigns of a purely Hindu State, have always regarded it as a religious duty to keep such institutions."

An English translation of the deeds by which the Rajahs of Parur and Alengad had transferred their right of sovereignty to Travancore is given below.

Parur:—Whereas we of our own accord have given you from the 2nd Menom 939 M.E. all our dominions comprising Parur, Porakaud and Thottapara and the properties royalties dignities and honours appertaining thereto within these dominions and also all the territories dignities and honours which we possess beyond the said dominions, you shall from this day enjoy all our dominions and the properties within and without these dominions and you shall protect the people, the gods and the Brahmins according to custom. You shall protect us also.

Alengad—I hereby agree to His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore administering from Kumbhom 937 M.E. the territory bounded on the east by Manjapara, on the south by Variapally, on the west by Thottapally, and on the north by Kochukadavu, together with all properties therein situated and all kinds of honorary privileges: also all such properties and dignities withe these limits. His Highness shall be in full enjoym of these. His Highness shall protect the gods, t Brahmins and the people in these territories. H Highness shall also protect us and our families.

These documents fully warrant the force and emphasis with which Sir Madhava Rao has expressed his views. The Quilon temple and choultry were similarly taken over from the ancient Quilon rajahs. In fact, several of these institutions were taken over along with the petty principalities into which the country north of Edavai was cut up in olden times. There were at first no choultries independent of the temples. The authorities adduced show such a uniformity of opinion that any attempt to do away with these institutions would be an attempt to break the solemn trust undertaken by the Government. Dewan V. P. Madhava Rao was struck by the character thus stamped on the constitution of the State; and his successor declared that any reform proposed must be consistent with the essential features of the constitution. The latest report of the Commissioner appointed to investigate the subject has only brought these essential features of devaswoms and State charities to further authentic light. In respect of the latter, the conclusion arrived at was that, in spite of the declarations of Dewans Krishna Rao, Seshaiah Sastri and Rama Iyengar the oottus were originally intended only for the benefit of the Brahmin travellers, there were reasons to believe, from the high *padivus* fixed from the institution of *Anchu Sadyas* and of *Dharma Conjee* to the resident poor, and from the uninterrupted practice that the resident poor of the Brahmin community were also intended to benefit by gratuitous feeding in oottupuras—at least in such of them as give more than one meal a day. Dewan Rajagopala Chari, who did not propose to follow the Commissioner into the origin of the institutions and the intentions of their founders, felt, how-

ever, that complete abolition was not at that stage feasible, and therefore he confined his sole attention to the systematic financial control over and curtailment of unnecessary expenditure on these institutions.

Mahomedanism.

The Mahomedans in this country are mostly converts from Hindusim. They are found in all taluks of the State and number over one and half lacs. They are a strong and hardy race and are divided into several classes, the two main divisions being known as the Shiahs and the Sunnies. The Koran is the sacred scripture of the Mahomedans and Mahomet is their prophet.

As observed by Sir Monier Williams: "The Moslems of India became partially Hinduised; and in language habits and character, they took from the Hindus more than they imparted. Hence it happens that the lower orders of the Mahomedans observe distinctions of caste as strictly as the Hindus." Many of them eat together, but do not intermarry. There are about 500 mosques in Travancore. The priests are called Thangals. There are 54 mosques in Trivandrum. This represents the highest number. Next comes Kalculam, the former capital of the country. Even in the essentially Christian centre of Kottayam, there is one mosque.

The history of Mahomedanism is easily stated- Tradition ascribes its origin to a writ obtained by Shaik-ibn-Dinar and his family from the last Perumal. He and his family went to Malabar bearing the Perumal's letters and delivered the letters to the addressees. They

obtained acceptance and recognition at the hands of the Chiefs, whose territories they visited with a view to spread and propagate the faith of Islam. The Kodungaloor Chief was the first prince they visited. They were received hospitably and given lands to build mosques on. Malik-ibn-Dinar became the first Kazi of the place. He sent to Travancore Kollam (Quilon) Malik-ibn-Habib with his wife and some of their children. The Travancore Maharajah received them hospitably, and also gave sites for the construction of mosques. The second great mosque was founded there by Hussain, one of the sons of Malik-ibn-Habib, who became its Kazi. The last of the famous Malabar mosques was constructed at Quilon. All this took place about the first half of the twelfth century, which formed an important era in the history of the Malabar Coast.

CHRISTIANITY.

It is an interesting feature that Travancore has a larger Christian population than any other Native State, 25 per cent. of the people of the State being Christians. The proportion of Christians to the rest of the population is 29 times that of British India—an unmistakable proof of the wisdom and tolerance of the Maharajahs of this State from very early times. The history of Christian Missions in Travancore may be traced under two broad divisions, namely, the Syrian Mission (comprehending the Catholic Mission) and Protestant Missions (including the Church Missions and the London Mission).

The Syrian Mission.

The earliest Christian Mission is ascribed by tradition to the advent of St. Thomas the Apostle, in the first

century of the Christian era. It will be seen, therefore, that the history of Christianity in this country is a history of over 1800 years. St. Thomas made numerous converts and built several churches. But on his death there was a great relaxation. The enthusiasm for the new creed became so much cooled down that, after the lapse of two centuries, there were only 8 families of Christians. However, there arrived in A.D. 345 a large colony of Christians from Bagdad, Nineveh, Jerusalem and other places under the guidance of Thomas Cana, a merchant who was then trading with the Malabar Coast. They were largely patronized by the early kings of Malabar. With their advent and under their influence, the Syrian Christians increased in number and power. Chaldean Bishops also came from Babylon off and on. These Bishops governed the churches until the arrival of the Portuguese in A.D. 1493. When the Portuguese Government grew in power, they began to bring the Syrian Christians under the sway of the Portuguese prelates. In 1581, a college appears to have been opened at Vaipicotta, where they had settled, to impart instruction in priesthood to the local Syrian Christians.

Mr. Mackenzie says, in his work on Christianity in Travancore: "In 1583 when Father Alex. Valigrane returned from Japan, he found awaiting him his appointment as Provincial of the Jesuits and he at once set to work on the systematic instruction of the Thomas Christians." The Syrian Bishop at this time was Mar Joseph. He was suspected of Nestorian heresy and, in consequence, was arrested and sent to Portugal and afterwards to Rome, where "his piety and erudition had

aroused a feeling in his favour." But he died there. In the meantime, at the request of the Syrians, the Nestorian Patriarch of Babylon sent Mar Abraham, appointing him to be the Archbishop of Angamali. He was arrested by the Portuguese and detained in the Dominican Convent. But he escaped and went to Babylon, when the Patriarch re-conferred on him the title of the Bishop of Malabar. He then proceeded to Rome and appealed to the Pope. The Pope confirmed him in his appointment.

Supported thus by the Portuguese authorities as well as the people, Mar Abraham came back to India. He held a Synod in 1583, at which he made a profession of the Catholic faith and the Syrian Missal was corrected. The Nestorian Patriarch of Babylon questioned the conduct of Mar Abraham, whose explanation only aggravated his offence. The Synod of Diamper was held in 1599, at which the faith of the Syrians was ennunciated. The union of the churches continued from 1596 to 1653, when it broke off. This was hastened by the fall of the Portuguese power in India. When the power of the Portuguese fell, the Papal power was disowned. A division took place among the Syrians. Some rejected the power of the Portuguese prelates and declared themselves independent. They formed a new sect, hence known as *Puthen Kuttukars*; while those who remained steadfast to Rome and continued to remain under the European ecclesiasts were called *Pazayakuttukars.* The Syrians who seceded wrote to several Patriarchs in Asia to send a rightly consecrated Syrian Bishop. A Jacobite Bishop, Gregory,

came and re-consecrated Mar Thomas, and henceforth a long succession of native clergymen governed the Puthencoor Syrians. With the commencement of the Dutch power in India, new dissensions arose. "But," as remarked by Mr. Mackenzie in his exhaustive and excellent work on Christianity in Travancore, "they seemed to have concerned themselves little about the Christians except from political reasons." The year 1806 is rendered memorable by the visit of Dr. Claudius Buchanan. He saw Colonel Macaulay, the British Resident in Travancore, and with him visited the northern parts of the country. At Angamali, he was presented with a copy of the old Syriac Bible, which has been in the possession of the Syrians for over 1,000 years. It was taken to England and published there.

The year 1816 opens a fresh chapter. It begins with the consecration of Mar Dionysius III. Col. Munro was the Resident at the time. He undertook to get missionaries from Europe. The Church Mission entered into friendly relations with the Syrians. With the Church Mission itself, we shall deal later on. This relation did not last long. The last portion of the history of the Syrian Church discloses how, under Mar Dionysius IV, it severed its connection with the Anglican Missionaries; how a special commission sat to adjudicate the claims on the endowments of the Kottayam Seminary; how both the parties languished under ten years of litigation; and how, in the end, Mar Dionysius obtained a decree in his favour. Mar Dionysius, the head of the non-reforming party, and Mar Thomas, the head of the reforming party, have between them the whole of the Travancore churches.

We have already remarked that the Church Mission here owed its existence to Col. Munro. He brought missionaries to train Syrian Deacons to carry on parochial schools. Thomas Norton arrived in 1816; and he was followed by Mr. Bailey, in November of that year. Then came Messrs. Baker and Fenn. Mr. Fenn was put in charge of the Seminary. His Highness's Government endowed the institution with Rs. 20,000 and a large estate at Kallada called "Munro Island." More than this, the tolerant and liberal Government of His Highness helped Mr. Bailey in the translation and distribution of the Bible, by another gift of Rs. 8,000. Col. Munro got the Honourable East India Company to invest 3,000 star pagodas in the name of the community for educational purposes. Col. Munro was the most earnest promoter of the Syrian Christian interests. There is an illustrious roll of missionaries who have laboured in this mission. It has several remarkable educational institutions and its principal station is Kottayam.

The London Mission.

This owed its early beginnings here to the enthusiastic efforts of its first convert, Veda Manikam. At his instance, Rev. Tobias William Ringletanbe came from Tranquebar in 1806 and built at Myladi a church in 1809 with the courteous consent of Rani Lekshmi Bai. The benevolent Rani endowed the church with 100 acres of paddy land, of which the revenue is now devoted to the support of the Nagercoil Mission College. Rev. Ringletanbe was succeeded by Mr. Mead, who came in 1816. The Rani was pleased to place at his disposal a Sirkar building with extensive premises, and to make a grant of Rs. 5,000 to

enable him to buy more lands for the Mission purposes. These concessions are in keeping with the tolerance and magnanimity characteristic of the Royal House of Travancore, so evident from the following recent utterance of H. H. the Maharajah :—

"The aid given to the schools and other institutions established by the good missionaries, who labour so disinterestedly, is no more than the assistance they have a right to expect, who help us so materially in the promoting of intellectual and moral advancement of our people." Mr. Mead was joined by Mr. Knill and others. In 1819 Mr. Knill laid the foundation of the Nagercoil chapel. The London Mission Society has stations at (1) Nagercoil, where the mission work began in 1818, (2) Neyoor, where mission work commenced in 1827, (3) Parasala, where mission work was started in 1845, (4) Trivandrum, where it was set on foot in 1837, and (5) Quilon, where it was organized in 1821. The mission work has progressed considerably in later times.

Such are some of the religious castes and creeds in Travancore. Lord Curzon is perfectly right when he observes : "In one respect His Highness enjoys a peculiar position of responsibility, for he is the ruler of a community that is stamped by wide racial differences and represents a curious motley of religions." The continuous prevalence of peace among them is an unerring proof of the fact that the Maharajah has "no higher ambition than to show consideration to the low, and equity and tolerance to all."

person who has, for instance, failed to pay a debt or Government tax, would have to swear by the holy bow that he would pay off the dues within a certain date. The faith of the people in the evil effects of an oath unfulfilled or broken was in those days, as it is even now, so strong that the *Chunkam* method bound them sufficiently to discharge their obligations.

Poetry.

The great bulk of Malayalam literature consists of translations or adaptations of the great Indian epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharatha. Thunchathu Ezhuthachan, who flourished in the 17th century, is the father of Malayalam literature. He was the first to introduce into the language its modern alphabet of the grantha character. He wrote several works which are at this day read with pleasure and profit. He has impressed on them the forms of Kilipattu harmony —a species of composition supposed to be sung by a parrot. This literary artifice answers to Milton's "Sing, Heavenly Muse" or "Descend, ye Nine." The Ramayana, the Mahabharatha and the Bhagavatha of Ezuthatchan belong to this species of composition. They are his best works. It is a mistake to suppose that his works are translations from the Sanskrit. No doubt he has drawn largely upon the rich lore of the great Indian epics. But his consummate judgment in the selection and arrangement of the materials, his original reflections and his copious, pure and eloquent expressions have infused into his works a fresh soul of harmony. He is allowed the same rank among Malayalam poets as Virgil among the Roman poets and Homer among the Greek.

The first and the best of the Malayalam lyric poets is Kunjan Nambiyar. Gifted with talents of a high order, he has invented a new type of national lyric called "Thullal," of which the subtlety and pathos are eminently suited to the genius of the language. The merit of the Thullals lies in their simplicity of structure, in the delineation of character, and in the fineness of sentiments. Of this species of poems he has a large number which will live and rouse up genuine interest as long as the language endures. The Thullal poems are more or less based on the incidents which fill the episodical portion of the Mahabharatha. Another kind of poetical composition which has immortalized his name is the Manipravala or poems in which the elegant pearls of the Sanskrit phraseology are interwoven with gems of native expressions. Among recent original productions, "Mayura Sandesa" or the Peacock Messenger by that Sanskrit savant—the late Kerala Varma Valiakoil Tampuran—is a rare ornament to this class of composition.

Drama.

The spirit of the Malayalam drama is illustrated by and summed up in what is known as "Katha Kali". It has the nature of a pantomime, but the actors never speak. The play is represented by mute action or dumb show, while the text will be vociferously sung by a party of musical experts. As the curtain rises, several actors enter the stage and translate into the language of finger signs and other variety of show, the sense of the dramatic entertainment. The science of symbols has attained a high state of perfection. The Maharajahs of this country used to take a special interest in Kathakali and have themselves composed several plays of this kind. The Maharajah who

died in 973 M.E. and his brother Aswathi Thirunal, the Kottayam Rajah and the Kottarakarai Rajah are poets of repute in this kind of composition.

Of the new type of the drama, Kerala Varma Valiya Koil Tampuran was the great pioneer. This scholar of rare attainments and culture, to whose unremitting labours the Malayalam language owes so much, has given a turning point to the structure and history of the Malayalam drama by his first translation of Kalidasa's matchless play of Sakuntala. The Sanskrit model thus introduced was quickly and rapidly developed.

Latterly Mr. Govinda Pillai has introduced to the Malayalam-speaking public the type of the English drama by his translation of some of Shakespeare's plays. He has contrived to employ in them the first specimen of Malayalam blank verse.

Novels.

The first Malayalam novel after the model of Sir Walter Scott is the "Marthanda Varma," followed up by its romantic sequel "Dharma Raja." Their gifted author has cleverly pieced together the fast-dying fragments of legends that gathered about the sovereigns whose names the novels bear. In "Akbar" by the Valiya Koil Tampuran, we have specimens of the pathetic, the descriptive, the eloquent and even the sublime. The novels of Chandu Menon have decidedly a ring of Lord Lytton's wonderful works. "Induleka," which has the rare merit of being done into English by Mr. Dumergue, is remarkable for the purity of its diction, the tenderness of its sentiment and the light it throws on Malabar manners and customs.

Miscellaneous.

The variety and abundance of works produced in recent years are marvellous. With the composition of the "Kerala Paniniyam" the language has received a new lease of life. The "Bhasha Bhushan" by the same gifted writer is the first treatise on Malayalam rhetoric. The appearance of the introductory and chemistry primers and the Navina Sastra series in Malayalam mark the beginning of scientific literature embodying modern science and modern thought. The translation of Dutt's "Ancient India" and other publications point to the progress in historical literature. The ennobling patriotic impulse and unwearied industry of scholars are fighting against all odds to enrich the Malayalam literature.

Art—Ivory workmanship.

The progress of Art was also due to the direct encouragement of the rulers of this State. The best samples of ancient sculpture in stone are to be seen in the principal temples of the country. Some of them are so delicately and artistically chiselled that they deserve to be classed among real works of art. But it is doubtful if they can be called Travancorean. For we see everywhere the influence of the Dravidian style of architecture and sculpture. There can be no doubt that the workmen employed came from the other side of the Ghauts. But in ivory-carving Travancore has long attained a reputation which it still retains. We find that the Rajah, who ascended the musnud in 1829, encouraged the art considerably, that during his time ivory workers from North Travancore brought "figures carved in ivory of so minute

a size that they could be enclosed in a paddy husk", and that this was executed with implements no better than a country knife. The ivory-throne used by the Rajah at the Durbar was the best specimem of their skill.

Raja Marthanda Varma, who succeeded him in 1846, evinced the same deep interest in the art and a State department was organized for the purpose. This was the beginning of the School of Arts now maintained by the State. Specimens of ivory works were sent to various exhibitions. In 1851 the Maharajah contributed to the International Exhibition (London) inaugurated by the late Prince Consort, an ivory throne. Her late Majesty, the Queen-Empress Victoria, to whom it was presented, wrote an autograph letter to the Rajah commending its exquisite workmanship. The throne now adorns the State room in Windsor Castle. The "Pall Mall Magazine," (London), has the following:—"In a walk through the 683 rooms and corridors of Windsor Castle there are of course to be found many pieces of furniture of the highest interest which there is not space to describe or illustrate. There is one piece which stands so prominently both from beauty of design and perfection of workmanship. This is the throne-chair entirely made of carved ivory and encrusted with precious stones which was presented to Her Majesty by the Maharajah of Travancore. It is upholstered in richly embroidered green velvet. The very shape of this chair should be to us a lesson in furniture designing. It is sad to think that, with all the money, thought and time spent on art training in this country (England), it is still absolutely impossible for us to produce an original piece of furniture of such beauty.

Good work we may and do make, but of original designs we have none. All that we design is but a lame copy or adaptation from the great masters of the past or from alien races who possess a finer sense of beauty than ourselves."

The Scientific American wrote thus:

"The presentation of the Royal autograph letter is the subject of an old painting by a European artist who visited the Maharajah at that time. The picture is now in the State Museum Library. It is an excellent memento of the event. Though the picture is not free from defects from the point of view of the present-day artists, the figures are boldly drawn and are faithful reproductions of the principal personages represented."

The commencement of the progress of the art of painting may be said to date from the reign of Raja Rama Varma who has left an undying name by his musical compositions in Sanskrit, Malaylam and Telugu. He invited men of talents from different parts of Southern India, and among these was Alagiri Naidu, a native of Madura, considered to be the best artist of the day. He was asked by the Rajah to impart instruction in the art to Raja Raja Varma Koil Tampuran of Kilimanoor, who displayed in early life a remarkable taste for it. The pupil, as it not infrequently happens, excelled the master. He rose very high in the Rajah's favour and soon came to be regarded as the greatest painter in Malabar.

To him, his nephew Raja Ravi Varma Koil Tampuran is indebted for his renown as the greatest Indian artist of the day. He is the founder of a school of painting which

has many followers; and when the time comes, as it must come, for a history of painting to be written, his name will no doubt find the first place. He has awakened a general in interest the art throughout the length and breadth of India and his influence has created from end to end of the empire an exquisite sense of the sublime and the beautiful. It is no exaggeration to say that in the life of Mr. Ravi Varma is contained the history of the progress of painting, specially in Travancore and generally in India. He has kindled the imagination with new conceptions and new beauties which had never before been the object upon which the artist's pencil was employed. And as the subjects are drawn from the incidents vividly depicted in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, every Hindu home is adorned with Ravi Varma's pictures and his name is remembered by his countrymen with an enthusiasm bordering on reverence.

V.

INDUSTRIES.

The existing local industries may be conveniently classified and considered under the following heads:—(1) Agricultural Industry, (2) Planting Industry, (3) Textile Industry, (4) Mining Industry, and (5) Miscellaneous Industries.

Agricultural Industry.

60 per cent. of the population are dependent on agriculture alone though only 35·2 per cent. of them form the actual workers. It is interesting to note that the pursuit of agriculture absorbs the attention of a greater portion of the population in the interior tracts (59 per cent.) than on the coast (38 per cent.), which affords facilities for

a variety of occupation and trade. The chief crops of agriculture may be grouped under two heads :—

(*a*) Field Crops, and (*b*) Garden Crops.

Field Crops.

This includes the principal food-grains, viz., paddy and millet with their several varieties. In the Industrial Exhibition held at Trivandrum in 1917, seventy-two varieties of paddy were shown. In Nanjinad, which is justly known as the granary of the south, paddy is largely grown. In Kunnathunad, 77,567 persons look up to agriculture as their occupation in life; in Muvattupuzha, 72,558; in Tiruvellah, 70,825; and in Mavelikarai, 70,492. The method of cultivation pursued in Nanjinad differs from the practice in North Travancore. The cultivated lands of the central parts generally lie scattered among the valleys and slopes between the ghats and the lakes. They are known as *Viruppu* lands in the north and *Elas* in the south. In Kuttanad, which comprises parts of Ambalapuzha, Kottayam, Chenganacherry and Ettumanur, and which suffers more from the incidence of the monsoons, the extent of cultivation and produce vary according to the limits of the inundations. *Punja* or wet cultivation prevails in the north, while *Nunja* or dry cultivation is confined to the south. This is because the average rainfall in the south is generally one half of that in the north. The river system also partly accounts for it. In the north the country is washed by very many large rivers, and the supply of water far exceeds the demand; in the south the demand for water far exceeds the supply. To preserve the balance

several works have been carried out by the Travancore Government, such as the Kodayar Irrigation Project.

The produce of the country is far from sufficient for home consumption. About 10,000 candies of rice are on the average annually imported from Tenkasi, Shencottah, and Tinnevelly; whereas in the beginning of the last century, Travancore exported a large quantity. This is due not only to the deterioration of land and the diminished outturn, but to the increase of population as well. There is a good deal of truth in the statement that the exhaustion of the soil is caused by the less careful and unscientific tillage, insufficient manuring, irregular fallows, and ill-adaptation to the monsoons—evils which are being carefully tackled by the newly-created Department of Agriculture.

Millet.

In regard to millet, it has been found that, of the total food-grain area in India, Madras has the greatest under it; and that taking India as a whole, the staple food-grain is neither wheat nor rice but millet. There are several varieties of millet. *Grain tenai* is a species of millet; also *Chamai* and *Kuraragu*, which are cultivated in the hilly tracts. In Neyyattinkara there are about 22 groups of kanis devoted to the cultivation of these products. Prior to 1816, these tracts were rented out to them by 'Thurakars' to whom they were subject. Now they are exempt from the payment of any tax to the Government. All the hill tribes of Travancore, except the Kadars and the Hill Pandarams, clear lands and raise crops of ragi. The cultivation, however, is not of a permanent character. It is difficult, therefore, to estimate its

extent. Mr. Bourdillon, however, puts down 50,000 acres as the probable extent of land cleared by them annually, and says that ragi yields more than rice and two-hundred-fold is not uncommon; but, at the same time, it is a very exhausting crop and cannot be grown on the same ground again.

Garden Crops.

The garden produce of the country includes chiefly the cocoanut, the arecanut and the palmyra, besides the cultivation of pepper, betel and cardamoms, for all of which the country has a special reputation.

Cocoanut.

This extends over the whole State, the soil of which is best suited for its growth. It is the staple industry of the people. The average yield of the tree is a hundred cocoanuts per annum. In sandy soils, it goes up to 200 and more. The annual value of *Copra* (from which oil is extracted) and of the fibre (out of which ropes are manufactured) amounts to nearly 90 lacs of Rupees. 324 candies are annually exported to the district of Tinnevelly alone. The total number of cocoanuts consumed in the country is calculated to be 60 millions per year. Through Alleppey and Cochin 10,000 candies are exported every year. From Trivandrum, Perumaturai, Anjengo, and Cherayinkil, 500 candies of copra and 1,000 candies of coir are yearly sent out, while the trade in these articles from Quilon to the north points to 6,000 candies of each.

Arecanut.

The soil is admirably suited for its growth. Unlike cocoanut, which thrives well in the vicinity of the sea and

the lakes, this plant thrives better as it recedes more and more from them. Its nuts, prepared into what is known as *Vettupakku*, are largely exported. Tinnevelly alone takes away annually *Vettupakku* worth Rs. 12,000. The value of the article which comes from Kayemkulam to the south amounts to Rs. 30,000 per year.

Palmyra.

It is the wealth of the south. The sugar of this palm, known as jaggery, is an article of much commercial value.

Pepper.

This is produced in great abundance and forms the wealth of the State. Time was when the State monopolized it. The average for 20 years shows the export of the article to the value of a lac of Rupees annually to Tinnevelly and other places, like Ariyankavu. The approximate trade value of this article that goes to Alleppey and Cochin amounts to Rs. 1,50,000 per annum. It formed, from the early times of the East India Company's trade, one of the chief articles of export. In 1873 the Maharajah entered into an agreement with the Company, known as the Pepper Contract, to supply a large quantity of pepper to the Bombay Government for ten years in return for arms and European goods.

Cardamom.

It is worthy of note that the Travancore cardamom and pepper enjoy a high reputation; and the State stands ahead of any other Indian locality in which they are grown. In the high ranges there are some elevated places where cardamom grows luxuriantly. This tract is mostly within

the limits of the Todupuzha Taluk. Like pepper, it was a State monopoly and is an important indigenous product.

The Cardamom Hills were controlled and managed by the Conservator of Forests till 1869. In that year the supervision of the Hills was transferred to a separate Revenue Officer appointed for the purpose. The tract was leased out to the ryots who had to deliver the produce to the Government at a fixed valuation. The ryots cultivated it and received two-fifths of the sale-proceeds. Fresh facilities of communication tended to the extension of the area of cultivation. The system of monopoly was found not to work well and was therefore abolished in 1896. With the introduction of the land-tax, the ryots came to enjoy almost the rights of permanent occupancy as well as of giving up the holding at will. This has created a great interest among them in the raising of the produce.

The Planting Industry.

This consists of the cultivation of coffee, tea and rubber.

Coffee.

Coffee had to struggle with serious difficulties and reverses. In the early part of the 19th century, it was introduced into the country. In 1854, General Cullen opened a garden at Velimalai, near Padmanabhapuram. He planted another garden at Ashamboo. This became, after his death, the scene of native enterprise under the distinguished lead and guidance of the late Maharajah and Rajah Sir Madhava Row. In 1861, Devasahayam, who had an experience of 20 years in large plantations in Ceylon, threw himself into the venture. The Victoria Estate at Ashamboo is a brilliant example of his per-

severance. The cultivation of the plant on a larg[illegible] is, however, due to the efforts of Mr. John Grant, [illegible] obtained from the Government an estate of 500 acres in th[illegible] Mahendragiri forests and opened up the industry in 1894.

On the Peermade Hills several estates were planted. In that year rules were drawn up by the Government for granting lands for coffee cultivation. The result was that by 1865 coffee caltivation flourished in not less than four parts of the Western Ghats, namely, Peermade, Shencottah, Agastia Peak, and Ashamboo. About forty thousand acres were taken up in 1873 and the auction sale of lands in 1874 brought to the Government a revenue of over 3 lacs of rupees. The average yield of the plant was 192 lbs. per acre. The highest yield rose to 336 lbs. The return of the crops yielded a value of Rs. 59,644 in 1864 and steadily went up therefrom. The highest figure on record was Rs. 99,050 in 1877, the yield being 412 lbs. per acre. In the next year there was a decline by 19 lacs of rupees. And the year following saw a tremendous fall, by 60 lacs of rupees. But in 1888 it was amply made up for by an unprecedented rise in the return to the value of Rs. 8,83,100. These bumper crops attracted many natives of the soil into the enterprise. Competition was keen. Prices rose high. Purchasers were indiscriminate. They paid little regard to the suitability of the land for coffee cultivation. The soil became exhausted. A virulent form of disease appeared which was soon followed by a root-disease also. Several estates came to be neglected and abandoned. Many capitalists failed. No cure has yet been found for the disease. Too much stress cannot be laid on the necessity of inviting specialists with a view to study

...ase and finding out an effective cure for it. Meantime, other suitable and reliable products were tried with supreme advantage.

Tea.

This admirably succeeds in the soils and conditions met with here. It has been observed that the industry has been successfully established and Travancore now rivals, if it does not surpass, the teas of Assam and Ceylon. There are now nearly 300 estates covering a total area of 47,670 acres under this product. Of these, the largest number is in Peermade, which has 75 estates; Kalculam comes next, having 64 estates; Meenachil has 42; Kottarakara owns 32; to Nedumangad belong 31; Shencottah and Velavancode possess 10 each; Pathanapuram and Chenganoor show four and three, respectively; while Neyyatinkara has only one. Of these again, only 37 are owned by Indians. The majority of the estates owe their enterprise to European capital.

Rubber.

The planting of rubber is a recent industry and promises well. The cool alluvial flats of the valley of the Periyar and the basin of the Lower Kolathoopuzha are admirably suited for it. The spontaneous growth in these regions is an indication that even exotic species under careful culture would yield rubber of excellent quality. Mundakayam is the home and heart of this industry.

Textile Industry.

It includes the manufacture of fibres into different kinds of fabric works. The fibres of Travancore may be grouped under three classes:

(*a*) Seed Fibres. (*b*) Leaf Fibres. (*c*) Bark Fibres.

Seed Fibre.

Cotton manufacture, which is entirely of the seed-fibre of cotton, has progressed well in Travancore. In Tovalay about 70 acres and in Agastiwaram 250 acres are under cultivation. Its manufacture into thread and country goods engages the attention of a good portion of the people of Kottar, which has been one of the most noted weaving centres of South India since the days of Ptolemy (3rd century A. D.). The "Indian Art Referee" describes cotton fabrics as 'the immemorial glories of India', and says that India was probably the first of all the countries that perfected weaving and that the art of its brocade and filmy muslin is even older than the Code of Manu.

Though quite fallen, the cotton industry in Travancore is not dead. Evidences are not wanting that in Nanjinad and Eraniel there is a large area of cotton cultivation. The trade in cloths of country manufacture which goes from Kottar yields, calculating it for 20 years, an average value of a lac of rupees per annum. Hand-spinning is practised by the native dealers. Weaving is carried on in private looms at Thamarakulam, Milady, Thittivelay, Kolachel, Eraniel and other places in South Travancore; and at Shencottah, Quilon, Shertallay, and Mavelikarai further up. About 5,000 looms are said to be at work. The weavers use several warping wheels. In contrast with most parts of India, weaving cotton by hand has not declined in Travancore. Hand-loom weaving is decidedly on the increase in respect of the indigenous Neriathu (a fine fabric) and Thuvarthu (scarf) peculiar to the country. The total number of persons subsisting by professions connected

with cotton is 28,807, of whom 27,000 and odd are weavers by hand.

Coir-Making.

Coir is manufactured from the seed-fibre of the cocoa-nut. It gives subsistence to 4·5 per cent. of the population. Particulars of this industry have already been given.

Leaf Fibres.

Of these the plantain is the commonest. It is extensively grown throughout the country. The machine used for extracting the fibre is simple and portable, and its cost is very small. Plantain worth Rs. 3 yields fibre which, when manufactured, would fetch Rs. 5 in the market. A regular industry has not grown up in this fibre, evidently for want of encouragement.

Aloe or Ana Kathazha.

This, which has become naturalized in the country, and pineapple produce very good fibres which would admirably fill the places of the European flax.

Bark Fibres.

The *Vakkanar* is a strong and durable fibre. All the layers can easily be stripped off and made into excellent cordage. The *Arayangelli* yields strong fibres fitted for matting, sacking and rope-making. The *Hucho,* a species of sun hemp used in making fishing net, is largely found in Shencottah, Ampalapuzha, Shertallay, Vycome, Alangad and Parur.

Mining Industry.

Mining is a national enterprise and renders important service to the production of wealth as the history of many advanced countries shows. But the stores of mineral wealth of Travancore have yet to be explored.

Plumbago.

This is found in large quantities. Its existence was first discovered by General Cullen in 1845. Three mines were worked by Messrs. Parry and Co., and the Morgan Crucible Co. The total output of these mines was the highest in 1902, being over 45,000 tons; in 1903 it came down to 33,000 and odd; and the yield in 1904 was only 32,000 and odd. This fall in the outturn was due to the gradual decline in the Vellanad and Cullen Mines. The Vengaunr Mines showed some steady increase. The outturn was 57 tons in 1901. In 1903 it rose up to 144 while in 1904 the yield was 241 tons. These mines are closed now.

Iron.

Iron is also found throughout the country. From the Edamalai Hills it is brought to Marungoor and Vannankulam, where it is smelted and made into bars and taken to the neighbouring markets. It is quarried near Balaramalpuram, Malayainkil, Kulathoor, and Karacode. Thanika yields good iron ores; and iron is manufactured from the ore brought from Kaithakad Hills in Kottarakarai. But the difficulty of obtaining the ore, which often happens to be under water, seems to have held back the miners from the enterprise. Iron ore is gathered from the Manavarapara in Panthalam. Mavelikarai has a special reputation for the manufacture of knives. The black soil in the watercourses of Pulenkudiyiruppu and Achan Pudur in Shencottah is noted for its iron alloy which, when smelted with charcoal, gives a hundred pounds of iron for every 150 parahs of sand so smelted. But the industry is abandoned, as the cost of manufacture exceeds the price it would

fetch in the market. A large quantity of iron ore is found in Kunnathoor.

Mica.

Some mica was laid bare in South Travancore. In Eraniel about 13,000 pounds are reported to have been turned out in 1899.

The State Geologist has just completed a general geological survey of the State, and the investigation of special subjects has brought to light the possibility of graphite industry.

MISCELLANEOUS INDUSTRIES.

Sugar.

It is well known that sugarcane abounds in all the northern districts of Travancore. The manufacture peculiar to these districts is molasses. This was experimented on in the Trivandrum Agricultural Demonstration Farm, with the result that an acre was found to return Rs. 250. The area under sugarcane is so enormous that it is an impetus to the expansion of the sugar industry. The introduction of sugarcane mills will sensibly affect the foreign import of that article. The average trade statistics prepared for 20 years show that from Changanacherry, the chief centre of the sugarcane cultivation, 1,000 candies of molasses find their way to Trivandrum annually, 1,500 candies pass through Quilon and 160 from Kayamkulam to Tinnevelly and other places; and yet sugar to the value of Rs. 19,000 is being imported every year. Immense is the field for the production of sugar adequate for home consumption if organized skill, labour and capital could be applied to this industry. In other countries so favourably situated, the

opportunity of catering for a population ten times as large as that of Travancore would long ago have been seized by capitalists.

Paper.

The refuse of the sugarcane mills is considered to be good paper material, as also young shoots of bamboos and several kinds of reeds in which the country abounds. Paper-making is one of the best industries to which the natural resources make the country preeminently fitted. In 1883 Mr. Routledge, a paper mill expert, who was, at the instance of the Government of India, then engaged in examining the Burma forest bamboos with a view to utilizing them for paper manufacture, was requested by Dewan Ramiengar to analyze a collection of Travancore fibres in order to test their suitability for paper-making. Mr. Routledge's expert opinion was quite favourable. A company was started. It worked well for some time. The plant is in ruins now.

Trade and Commerce.

It is a remarkable fact that more than 88 per cent of the trade of Travancore is with British India; and this has been mainly due to the removal of the fiscal restrictions between Travancore and British India by the Interportal Convention of 1865. The arrangements which were submitted by the Madras Government as regards Travancore were: the free admission of all goods, the produce of manufactures of India, except cotton and cotton goods, metals, tobacco, salt, opium and spirits; the free admission of all goods, the produce or manufactures of Travancore into British India, with the exception of salt, opium, and

spirits; the adoption of British Indian rates of duty on all foreign goods imported into Travancore, except the articles above mentioned; the levy of duties not less than those obtaining in British India on exports; the adoption of British Indian tariff valuation, the export tariff being taken in regard to cotton fabrics of native manufacture; and the adoption of British Indian monopoly price of salt. The Government of India did not accede to the exception stipulated for by Travancore in respect of import duty on raw and manufactured articles and crude and manufactured metals, whether British Indian or foreign (including English), which have paid duty at British Indian ports or have been exempted from duty on exportation from British territory or in respect of the reservation of rights to levy export duty on every article of its own produce exported anywhere else. The effect of the first of these was to place the British staples of piece-goods and metals under a disadvantage when they were imported into Travancore. Notwithstanding the fact that all articles of Travancore produce are manufactured, all foreign articles re-exported from Travancore ports would be admitted duty free into British Indian ports. The effect of the second was to enable the Travancore Government to levy high export duties at the cost of the British Indian interest. For if import duty were charged in British Indian ports on such exports, the Travancore Government could not charge such high rates of export duty.

Accordingly the Travancore Government were asked to reconsider and revise the proposals. After a lengthy correspondence, the Travancore Government agreed to abolish the first and lower the tariff rate on the second.

The Madras Government accepted the proposals and got them confirmed by the Government of India, and the final arrangement then made in respect of the removal of fiscal restrictions of trade between Travancore and British India obtains to this day.

In the domain of industrial and economic development, the part that the State has to play is great. The *laissez faire* doctrine, that the development of commerce and industry is not within the province of the State, has long ago been exploded. In most of the civilized countries the State does everything in its power to promote the growth and development of industries. The first thing needed, therefore, is a great State-scheme of assistance. It has to co-ordinate a number of disjointed things. The following extract from a powerful official minute describes the present situation: "We have no accurate information at hand as to the amount of agricultural stock in the country, the number of cattle, sheep, goats and ploughs, nor as to the various products grown, the acreage under each, the average crop secured in ordinary seasons, the mode of cultivation, the season for sowing and reaping, the rotation of crops, fallows and manures, the state of the labour market, prices and wages, the expenses and profits of agriculture, the interest charged on loans, the ebb and flow of local trade, the stocks in the country, the growth and progress or decline of any particular industry, such as sugar and sago manufacture and a variety of other points, a knowledge of which is essential to good and successful administration."

The first and the most important thing is to bring into existence a competent commission of inquiry for

investigation into the conditions and needs of a number of important branches of industry and trade and into the problem of finance. The research methods must be *practical* and not academical. The work of such an expert commission would no doubt, as His Excellency Lord Chelmsford said at the Imperial Legislative Council, with reference to the Holland Commission, "result in the stimulation of existing industries and the foundation of others and the increase of the material prosperity of the people."

SECTION VI.

HISTORY.

Early Travancore.

From Early Times to Marthanda Varma.

About a third of India and one-fourth of its population are under the direct rule of Indian princes and chiefs. In the eloquent words of Lord Curzon: "Side by side with our own system, and sometimes almost surrounded by British territory, there are found in this wonderful country the possessions, the administration, the proud authority and the unchallenged traditions of the Native dynasties—a combination which both in the picturesque variety of its contrast, and still more in the smooth harmony of its operation, is, I believe, without a parallel in the history of the world." They have now, as in the past, proved their splendid loyalty to the British Empire. They unreservedly recognize the essential benefits they have gained, and are gaining under British suzerainty. And just because they are convinced that hitherto they have been led along the path of progress, their true appreciation and not any idle sentiment has, at the present world-crisis, resulted in

a measure of devotion and self-sacrifice almost unparalleled in history. Under the vigour and influence of British rule, whose policy is "to retain the Native States intact, to prolong and fortify their existence, and to safeguard the prestige and authority of their rulers," the system of Native States has come to be so fitted into the Imperial edifice that it forms an integral part of the Empire. In writing the history of an Indian State, therefore, a proper perspective cannot be had unless the whole Empire is viewed as an organism and not as a conglomeration of isolated parts. Indian States should be looked at in the larger light of the British Empire. In this view the history of Travancore will be found to be of high significance and special interest.

The history of Travancore is the resultant of two forces—the force of tradition on the one hand, and the impact and the influence of British civilization on the other. In dealing with the first we must see Travancore in its own original atmosphere.

Travancore is the mirror of ancient India, the sole surviving specimen of strong and splendid tradition. It is the most Indian of Indian States, and lives up to the full meaning of its hoary past. This is due to the venerable antiquity of the Royal House, which dates back several centuries before the birth of Christ, long before the modern European nations came into existence. Apart from the specific, and often episodical, references in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Maha Bhagavata and the Puranas, the earliest historical reference is in the edicts of Asoka, where we have specific reference to the

Royal House of Chera—a circumstance which is indicative of its importance and independence at the time. In his description of ancient India, Megasthenes, the Greek Ambassador at the Court of Chandragupta in the 3rd century B.C., alludes to the King of Chermæ (Chera) and his 60 elephants and speaks of female sovereigns, and of ivory and sandalwood which attracted the Phœnicians to our coast and found later on, during the age of the Emperor Augustus, a considerable sale in the markets of Rome. And there is abundant evidence of Roman coins having flowed into our country at the time, as manifest from a paper said to have been published at Trivandrum in 1851 by the scholar and missionary Bishop Caldwell, who describes in it 30 varieties commencing with the earlier coins of Augustus and including some of Nero. The temple of Augustus and the Roman garrison at Cranganore, and the right of mint, which the Romans had at Madura, signify something more than a commercial relation with the Romans, and point to the probability of Mr. Caldwell's account.

According to Pliny and the anonymous work, "Periplus Maris Erythræa," Greek ships anchored off Nindakara near Quilon—a port which in the middle Ages was the entrepot where the Chinese traders from the east and the Arabs from the west bartered their wares. Embassies from the Celestial Emperor were addressed to the King of Benati or Venad, the ancient designation of Travancore. Soleyman of Siraf in Persia testifies to Chinese ships trading at Quilon on their way to Canton from the Persian Gulf. Among the early Christian missionaries, the great Apostle of the Indies, St. Francis

Xavier, who founded the big Roman Catholic Church at Kottar, in his letter mentions "the Great King of Travancore as having authority over all Southern India." Epigraphical records also show that "A King of Travancore made the Pandyas and Cholas subject to Kerala." Is it not, therefore, something more than phenomenal that, while all other ancient kingdoms of the south have only a nominal existence in the fragile memories of the past, the lineal descendant of the Cheras alone has the unique privilege of being able to continue uninterrupted his sway over this southern portion of the Indian Peninsula?

Ancient Constitutions.

The ancient constitution of the country, at the time when we begin to get any historic glimpse of it, is tellingly described by the late Maharajah in the following words:—

"According to all legends and all available evidence, the Malabar Coast was populated by Aryan emigrants from the eastern side of the ghats. It is equally a fact that the priestly class not only predominated among the emigrants, but they foresaw that the halo of sanctity which encircled themselves might not be proof against the gradual degeneracy of religious feelings which time must produce, and the consequent encroachment upon their supremacy in the land. And they constitutionalized that sanctity by demising large tracts of land and their revenues to certain temples built and consecrated by them. Men who would not hesitate to rob a priest may still hesitate to commit sacrilege on an object of general religious worship. Of these temples, the priest assumed the

proprietary wardenship. Almost every temple of note had a synod of these priestly wardens. They invited the leading layman or chief to a membership of the synod and entrusted to him the stewardship of the whole temple domain, subject to their superior authority. Thus arose those rich temples. Thus the sovereignties of the Malabar Coast." Accordingly the Devaswoms exercised sovereign functions. The functionaries were designated Koil Adhikarikals. In course of time, the country came to be studded with such powerful bodies.

Petty Principalities.

On the death or disappearance of the last of the Cheraman Perumals and the consequent downfall and disruption of the Chera Empire at the commencement of the Malabar Era, they asserted their independence, and set at defiance the several chieftains who became rulers of the land. These were numerous and their territory in each case scarcely exceeded the size of a modern taluk.

The Brahmin Principality of Vembanad was compressed within the boundary of the modern Ambalapuzha, ruled by the Chembagaseri Rajahs. Old fortifications intersected the country of Vadakannur and Thekkanur, whose Rajahs held sway over the tract of land between Pandalam and Perumbavur. Kottayam was held by a Kartha, Menachil by a Samander chief, and Shertallay by Madampimars or feudatories of Cochin. Edapally too had its own Rajah. We find the first Travancore sovereign who, in token of his direct descent from the stock of the original Chera Emperor, styled himself Kulasekhara Perumal, ruling over the bit of

land between Anjengo and Oodaghiri, the nucleus of modern Travancore.

Ecclesiastical Council.

The most dominant feature of the times was the influence of temple committees and village assemblies in the administration of affairs. The Council governed the affairs of Devaswoms; and the ancient constitution, under which the most important temple of Sri Padmanabha was managed, is still in force. This Council consisted of one Namburi Sannyasi, six Potti Brahmins, and one Nair nobleman, each having a vote, while the sovereign, who was also a member of this governing body, possessed only half a vote. Thus there were 8½ votes in all, on account of which the Council come to be known as *Ettarai Yogam,* or the Council of the eight and a half. It is traced to the commencement of the Malabar Era, on the basis of old records in the Trivandrum pagoda. We know nothing of the working of this Council till its first historic session was held 235 years after it had been founded, when the rules for the management of the temple were renewed. The only historical fact known during the period is the continuance of the power of the Cholas and the Pandyas in Nanjanad. Towards the close of the 3rd century M. E., Travancore defeated the Pandyan King, Raja Simha, and his confederate, and conquered Kottar and the portion of Nanjanad under their sway (1117 A. D./292 M. E.). Vira Kerala Varma, his successor, appears to have kept at bay the Chola power in the land, by a sort of political peace-offering, which consisted of a dedication of the tax in paddy and money due from Vadasery, as a gift to the temple of Rajendra Choleswara

People's Assembly.

It was during the period of his two immediate successors that the Cholas were expelled from the land and the remaining portion of Nanjanad added to the kingdom. It was at this time that the village governments, which had existed before, came to be duly recognized and supported by the sovereign. We also notice the existence of a Triumvirate for the administration of affairs in Nanjanad.

From the evidence of inscriptions, it is seen that, besides the village associations, there was also an important public body under the name of the Six Hundred. The supervision of temples and charities seems to have been vested in this corporation. With reference to this corporation, the late Professor Sundaram Pillai observes in his "Early Sovereigns of Travancore," that a number so large, nearly as large as the British House of Commons, could not have been meant in so small a State as Venad was in the 12th century A. D./4th century M. E., for the single function of State supervision. It looks probable that this body either elected the barons or indirectly influenced the business transacted by the chieftains in charge of the 18 districts into which, according to this record, the country appears to have been divided at the time. Such a probability receives countenance as a legacy of the Brahmin colonists of Parasu Rama, who tried several modes of government, first a republic, then an oligarchy, and finally a system of protectors elected from the villages. These chieftains took for themselves a portion of the land within their jurisdiction in return for the protection afforded by them to the rest of the community, in the same way as the original *Rakshapurushas* or protectors. They became a

powerful factor, and their revenue collectors, who belonged to eight families of Nair nobles and were therefore known as *Ettuveetu Pillamars,* became a source of oppression to the people. The Assembly loudly protested against this, and its powerful voice prevailed, as is evident from the Mavelikarai inscription of 1235 A. D.

A Great Charter.

It contains the proclamation issued by the sovereign in terms of the resolution passed at the historic session of the Kodanallore Assembly. The proclamation prohibits the farming out of lands to the highest bidder by the ecclesiastical dignitary, who enjoyed the revenues; empowers members of the *Sabha* to inspect the lands in seasons of drought and the consequent failure of crops; provides for the authorization, in writing, to realize or to remit arrears and other minor charges; and generally recognizes the principle of accepting what "the members of the *Sabha* and the inhabitants agree among themselves and pray for in common."

Prof. Sundaram Pillai rightly calls this one of the great charters of Travancore, and comments as follows :— "Here is a proof, if need be, of the independent nature and constitution of the old village assemblies of Travancore. The *Sabhas* appear as permanent and well-constituted public bodies that acted as buffers between the people and the Government. The whole procedure reflects the greatest credit on all the parties concerned, their conjoint action resulting in so precious a charter to the people and so unmistakable a monument of the sovereign's unbounded love of his subjects." This

measure was naturally displeasing to the *Yogakars*, with whose long-established liberty it interfered; and it necessarily exasperated the rebel Nairs, to whose rapacity as revenue collectors it gave the deathblow. These bodies, therefore, combined to undermine the influence of the Assembly and to checkmate the authority of the King. But during the reign of the Rajah who issued the proclamation, and of some of his successors, all of whom were capable rulers, they could not but submit to authority. The opposition which had continued for a long period came to a head when a weak king, Aditya Varma, ascended the throne.

The invasion of Nanjanad by Tirumal Naik, the greatest of the Pandyan kings, brought matters to a crisis. The people were harassed both by the invaders from without, and by the insurgents from within. When after plunder the former were out, the latter were in to extort money in the name of defence. The king was helpless. The people of Nanjanad flew into an open revolt. Easily, therefore, the Nairs carried everything before them; they pursued the King to Trivandrum, sacked and burnt the new palace built by him there, and eventually poisoned him. To these deeds of violence, they added the atrocious murder of five children of the surviving Ranee, to whom, however, they ostensibly professed their allegiance, while they were really prepared to extirpate the royal family and to erect on its ashes a protectorate under the rule of one of themselves. The next three sovereigns were not able to put down the rebels. In this state of anarchy and confusion, Marthanda Varma, the maker of modern Travancore, ascended

the throne of his ancestors in A. D. 1729. In describing the state of affairs then, the late Maharajah truly observes: "Rajah Marthanda Varma succeeded to a heritage as thorny as it was poor. The feeble rule of a series of his predecessors had fostered the greed of the surrounding chieftains and the turbulence of internal malcontents to such an extent that their kingdom was almost a misnomer and their authority little better than a mockery."

TRAVANCORE IN THE MAKING.

From Marthanda Varma to Col. Munro.

Insurgent Barons.

The first thing that Marthanda Varma had to do was to rid the country of the incubus of the disloyal and wicked barons. Their inveterate hatred his powerful personality had already drawn, even as a young prince, when during the last reign he participated in the Alliance Treaty with the Pandyan king, in order to put down their lawlessness. Their regicidal proclivity was felt by him when his life was attempted by them at the Kalliankad temple. His providential escape was due to the ready ingenuity of the *Santhikaran* (an East Coast Brahmin) who loyally underwent self-martyrdom to save the life of the king, as evident from the temple records and *Danasasanom*, according to which the descendants of the *Thala Kodutha Aiyar* (i.e., literally, the Brahmin who gave up his head) enjoy the royal gifts of lands to the present day. When Marthanda Varma became the acknowledged sovereign of the land, the feudal Nairs attempted to take away his title of succession to the

throne. To make it out that he was a usurper, they instigated the two Thampis to set up their claim to the throne as sons of the late ruler, and to seek the intercession of the powerful Pandyan ruler to put them on their father's throne.

Pandyan Arbitration.

To add to it there was the misrepresentation of Marthanda Varma's attitude towards him as hostile. He had also an opportunity of taking his own chance as a potent arbiter of rival claims. The result was the deputation of a Pandyan force under Azhagappa Mudaliar to inquire into the matter and espouse the cause of the Thampis. The armed deputation arrived at Oodaghiry and encamped there. Rama Iyen, who first came to the notice of the Rajah as a young Brahmin boy, who trimmed the wick and brightened the lamp at the Rajah's banquet, and who was destined to cast a fresh lustre on the name and the country of his royal master, was the Palace Rayasom or Under Secretary—an office of considerable trust and responsibility at the time. He met the armed deputation in conference, and gave a clear insight into the matriarchal law of inheritance adopted by the royal family.

Principle of Matriarchy.

The several branches of the Kolath stock, from which the Royal House takes its descent, are collateral offshoots of the same parental stock, and, as such, according to Hindu law, cannot intermarry. The preservation of ancestral position and purity of stock, and the gradual extinction of other stocks, except the *Dayadi*

descendants, have naturally led to the adoption of members from the collateral branches as sisters of the reigning sovereign, and to the importation of Koil Thampurans for marital alliances and the perpetuation of this ancient royal dynasty. The line of descent thus came to be through females. The Thampis or children of sovereigns by their consorts—generally Nair ladies of good lineage and family—do not inherit the kingdom or anything else of the king. It is a remarkable fact that in the dispute of a century ago between the Rajah of Travancore and the Pandyan ruler as to the sovereignty of Nanjanad, the decision in favour of the former turned upon the loyal adoption of the Travancore law of succession by the Nanjanad pillamars.

The outcome of the conference was the dismissal of the claims set up by the Thampis. The acceptance of the principle of *Decensus a Matrice* in the royal house, by the Pandyan ruler, is an event of considerable historical importance, because it led later on to the expulsion of the pretender prince of Mavelikarai, and eventually formed the basis of Lord Canning's Sannad of Adoption, after the country had passed under British protection.

Extirpation of rebels.

Before withdrawal, the Pandyan arbiter, who found in Marthanda Varma the rightful ruler, was pleased to place at his disposal a portion of the contingent as a help to quell the internal rebellion. This struck terror into the hearts of the insurgents. Marthanda Varma then opened negotiations with the Nattars of Nanjanad, exempted them from the imposts that pressed on them, and took them into

his confidence. He next made peace with the East India Company, who had already established a factory at Anjengo and whose fury the feudal rebels had roused by their violent attack on the place while it was being fortified, and by the subsequent murder of some of the English factors. He made amends by awarding them lands in Pataladi and Kotudali, and secured their goodwill and support. Having strengthened his hands thus, he mobilized a powerful army, and extinguished, once for all, the lawless band of Nairs who had ravaged the country and robbed it of peace for two long centuries.

Expansion of territory.

Rama Iyen, the king's trusted lieutenant who had remained behind the scene all the while, now became Dalawah, which united in him the functions of Minister and Commander-in-Chief. The subsequent military expeditions and the extensive expansion of territory were entirely due to the wonderful ability and genius of this soldier-statesman, 'great in council; great in war.' He supplanted the militia by regiments drawn from companies of Maravars, and fought and won several battles. The most notable victory was the one achieved at Colachel over the Dutch forces in 1740. This victory over their rivals drew the English East India Company into closer contact with Travancore, and secured at the same time the services of the Dutch General, De Lannoy, who improved the quality of the native army. With the force thus equipped and disciplined, Rama Iyen carried his arms successfully as far north as Cochin, and built up, from a few scattered districts, the extensive kingdom of to-day, save the outlying tracts of Alengad and Parur, which were ceded by the

Rajah of Cochin afterwards. He then inaugurated a revenue system which is the foundation of the revenue administration of to-day.

'An act of State Policy.'

To this marvellous achievement of State-conquest and State-control, the heroic sovereign superadded a State-religion. He reconstructed the ancient shrine of Sri Padmanabha, dedicated the dominion to the presiding deity, and assumed sovereignty in His name and as a sacred trust. To the policy and position of the State as determined by this fundamental fact, Mr. V. P. Madhava Row thus refers in his address to the Popular Assembly constituted during his Dewanship: "Those who are familiar with the history of the State know and realize the full import and significance of the great act of State policy adopted in the middle of the 18th century by the illustrious Rajah Marthanda Varma of immortal fame, by which the sovereign after subjugating the different principalities and chieftains and consolidating them into the compact kingdom as you find it to-day dedicated the whole State to the presiding deity. The character thus stamped on the State has never been lost sight of by his successors on the throne of Travancore, and they have striven to discharge the sacred trust handed down to them with unswerving loyalty."

Marthanda Varma's successor.

The constructive work thus completed by Marthanda Varma was further consolidated by his successor Rama Varma, also an illustrious sovereign. He was called Dharma Rajah because of his nearest approach to the ideal of a Hindu king. He was also familiarly known as 'Kizhavan

Rajah,' because of his having been the longest-lived ruler of Travancore in modern times. He was well skilled in arms and bore a conspicuous part in the warfare of his heroic uncle. Prince Rama Varma revealed his ingenuity then by going out, dressed like a Moslem, into the enemies's camp to know their plans, and making good his escape as the Nair torchbearer of a Namburi dignitary. With General De Lannoy as his right hand, this sovereign helped his weak neighbours, and held his own against foreign aggression The ambitious Zamorin of Calicut overran Cochin. Rama Varma, to whom the Cochin Rajah applied for help, defeated and drove back the Zamorin, who, on being further pursued to his capital, was forced to enter into an Alliance Treaty with Travancore. The Cochin Rajah too became a grateful ally and ceded the tributary states of Alangad and Parur for the great service rendered.

Frontier Fortification.

Dalawah Marthanda Pillai, whose name is associated with this victorious campaign, died soon after, and was succeeded by Subbier of Varkalai, in whose ability and integrity the ruler had great confidence. Dalawah Subbier secured, by agreement, the surrender of the sovereign rights of the petty rajahs over the ceded districts of Alangad and Parur, fixed the boundary of the northern frontier, and fortified it with extensive military lines as a further protection from the possible inroads of Hyder Ali, whose power and schemes of conquest were growing day by day. This was a fitting supplement to the Aramboli frontier-fortifications in the south built by the great Dalawah Rama Iyen in the previous reign for the complete defence of the country. As observed by Shungunni Menon

in his 'History of Travancore,' "Subbier finally completed the work most energetically commenced by Rama Iyen." Thus the Rajah was in a position to challenge Hyder's threatened invasion, which, however, this Dalawah did not live to resist.

British political relationship.

It was given to Raja Kesava Das to render signal services when hostilities commenced. He was an able and patriotic minister, the foremost statesman of the times. The most noticeable feature of his success was the establishment of the present political relationship by treaty with the East India Company. It was in recognition of his firm attachment to the Company that Lord Mornington conferred on him the title of Raja. This attachment was only a reflex of the soverign's affinity to the Company; for the Commissioners who sat on the Malabar Land Settlement of 1792 have placed the following statement on record:—

"We own he left a favourable impression on our minds both as to his personal good qualities and what we consider as the unequivocal sincerity of his attachment to the East India Company."

The cordiality of this connection came to be completely lost sight of in the weak reign of Rama Varma's successor, called Avittam Thirunal Rama Varma. All his ministers easily supplanted his authority, and exercised an absolute influence in the conduct of affairs. The policy of his first minister (whose rise to that position was clouded with suspicion of the murder of his predecessor, Raja Kesava Das), led to the insurrection

of 1799. Velu Thampi, who headed this insurrection, pursued alike a policy suicidal to himself and his country's cause. The key-note of his policy was cruelty and vindictiveness. The effect of this on the Nair troops, whose military allowance he reduced, was their mutiny in a body to get rid of him. The subsidence of this internal commotion through the intervention of the British force caused the revision of the subsidiary engagement. Through the efforts of Col. Macaulay, the first British Resident appointed by the East India Company in 1800, a fresh treaty was entered into in 1805.

The Treaty of Perpetual Friendship and Alliance.

This treaty, which continues to govern the present political relations with the paramount power, confirmed the sincere and cordial relations of peace and amity between the Rajah and the East India Company. It is known as the Treaty of Perpetual Friendship and Alliance between them. By this treaty the Rajah was required to pay for a native regiment, in addition to the subsidy fixed in 1795, and further to share the expenses of his large forces when necessary, to pay at all times the utmost attention to the advice of the British Government, to hold no communication with any foreign State, and to admit no European foreigner or to allow him to remain in his territory without the sanction of the British Government.

A dark episode.

The increased subsidy and the reserved power of interference of the British incensed Velu Thampi; while the arrears into which he allowed the subsidy to fall,

and his arbitrary and even atrocious methods of administration, roused the wrath of Col. Macaulay. Velu Thampi organized an insurrection to murder Macaulay and to subvert the British power. He made his murderous attack on the Cochin Residency at first; but failed in his attempt there; he made his second attack on the British garrison at Quilon. In the interval of this bloody campaign, he perpetrated a wholesale massacre of Europeans. Wilson in his "History of India" thus refers to the massacre: "About the same time, a small vessel with some of the soldiers of the 12th Regiment on board having touched at Alleppey for supplies, the men were induced to land, by the appearance of cordiality among the people and the assurance that part of the subsidiary force was in the neighbourhood. Unaware that hostilities had commenced, the men disembarked, and, as soon as they landed, were made prisoners and shortly afterwards murdered. This was also done by the order of the Dewan who thus effaced, by his perfidy and cruelty, whatever credit he might have claimed for zeal in the cause of his country and his prince." This inhuman act of Velu Thampi aroused the British Government to a sense of righteous indignation, and the British armies, which had saved Travancore from subjection to the power of Tippu and which had never set foot on its soil save in its defence, now invaded the country. The alarmed Rajah's candid disclaimer of the insurgents, his promise to defray the expenses of the military expedition and his piteous plea for protection, immediately followed by the death of the dangerous Dalawah, restored friendly relations with the British Government.

A grave crisis.

Omminy Thampi, who became Dewan after this insurrection, also usurped the Rajah's power. By letting his administration fall into a most disorganized state, he plunged the country in deep debt; and by allowing the subsidy to fall into arrears almost equal to a year's revenue of the State, he evoked the threat of the paramount power to assume direct government. It was at this moment that Col. Macaulay retired and the Rajah died. The striking features of his inglorious reign are thus summarized in the State Manual: "His is the darkest page of Travancore history and is a byword for all that is unlucky and incapable in the administration of affairs, for the persecution of retired officials, and the ill-treatment of their families, for the corruption and rapacity of public servants, for the disloyalty of ministers, and for the wanton faithlessness towards the East India Company—our staunchest friends and allies."

There was none to succeed the Rajah save the Regent Ranee. Her right of succession was closely contested by a prince of Mavelikarai. It was at this critical juncture that Col. Munro became the representative of the paramount power.

TRAVANCORE IN TRANSITION.

From Col. Munro to Rajah Sir T. Madhava Row.

A new epoch.

The nineteenth century marked the dawn of a new era with the commencement of Col. Munro's regime, just in the same way as the eighteenth century rang in a new

epoch with the beginning of Marthanda Varma's glorious reign. Col. Munro's first great act was to dismiss the claims of the Pretender Prince of Mavelikarai and to recognize the Ranee as the rightful ruler. With the approval of the British Government, he installed the Ranee on the throne of her ancestors, and placed the disappointed prince under surveillance, when the latter showed signs of disaffection; and deported him first to Tellicherry and, then to Chingleput as a State prisoner, when such disaffection tended to imperil the interests of the country.

On her accession to the throne, the sagacious queen dispensed with the services of Dewan Omminy Thampi who had proved disloyal to her uncle, and whose method of administration had brought the country to the verge of ruin. In view of the disordered state of the country, she placed complete confidence in the protection of the paramount power and sought the help of the Resident to conduct the administration. The British Government fully concurred in her views, because they considered that the spirit of turbulence, faction and low intrigues, which then prevailed, could not be effectually suppressed under the administration of a Native Dewan. To save the situation, they directed Col. Munro to assume the duties of the Dewan, in addition to his own as the British Resident. This policy of co-operation in a new direction is a highly valued concession of great historical importance, because it is a half-way house between the policy of annexation and the policy of direct administration for a time.

Deportation of a Dalawa.

In the elevation of Col. Munro as the supreme head of affairs, the retired Dewan Omminy Thampi saw only a

preliminary political design to annex the country and a base personal motive to crush his own position and power. He carried on a series of low intrigues quite in keeping with his antecedents. As observed by Col. Munro, "his behaviour towards the Rajah (late) was harsh and vindictive, his management of the country was irregular and oppressive, and his conduct to the Resident (late) exhibited a system of deception and counteraction. He was particularly obnoxious to the Ranee and his continuance in office would therefore be unfavourable to the attainment of close and cordial union between the States (i. e., Travancore and the British Government)." Omminy Thampi completely beat his previous record and vied with Velu Thampi by plotting against the life of Col. Munro, with the result that he was deported as a State prisoner to Chingleput.

Munro's Regime.

Col. Munro had at the outset of his administration to contend with three main difficulties, apparently insuperable. With the dead weight of the State debt, which, including the arrears of subsidy, had gone beyond the average annual revenue, hanging heavily on him, he had, on the one hand, to discharge his obligation to the Ranee, maintaining her dignity and authority consistently with progressive rule. This could be done only by increased revenue. He had, on the other hand, to conciliate the people by the abolition of obnoxious imposts and other burdens, which pressed heavily on them. This meant an obvious fall in the revenue. Two or three simple facts furnish the key to Munro's success in overcoming these difficulties. With the clear vision of a statesman, he

perceived at once that the confusion and corruption in which the country was steeped arose from the unhappy combination of civil, military and judicial functions in the Kariakars. He accordingly split up the combination, and recast the administrative machinery on the model of the British system.

Revised system.

He established a centralized form of government and affiliated to it separate departments for the discharge of the several functions. He abolished the superfluous offices of Valia Sarvadhikars and Sarvadhikars, and reduced the Kariakars to the position of revenue collectors with the designation of Tahsildars. He formed a separate department for the control of accounts and finance, raised an efficient corps of police and created a separate judicial branch. To the elements of responsibility thus fixed on the constitution, he added a code of revenue laws and civil regulations. This effectively put down, on the one hand, the abuses to which the old system was open; and secured, on the other, a free flow of revenue which chronic mismanagement and malversation had arrested before. After placing the administration on an efficient footing, Munro ameliorated the condition of the people by the abolition of several unjust taxes and oppressive imposts, and by the remission of old and unrecovered revenue balances. The immense sacrifice of revenues which this involved was more than compensated for by the volume of popular discontent it effectively removed.

A Momentous measure.

Among the several measures adopted for the improvement of revenue, by far the most important was the taking

over of Devaswoms under Government control. It was a measure of far-reaching consequences. It emancipated the Devaswom tenants from the oppression to which they had been subjected. It safeguarded the interests of the Devaswoms themselves by a guarantee of their management and maintenance by the State. It ensured the principle of trust inherent in the assumption of these endowed institutions. And, above all, it brought in a large addition of revenue to the State.

Thus in less than four years, Munro introduced order, extinguished corruption, established a new administrative system, enlarged the revenue and gave back the kingdom, in complete peace and tranquillity, to the royal family. The excellence of his administrative acts was equalled only by his redress of social injustice, as instanced by the active steps he took to abolish slavery, save in regard to predial labour—an outstanding measure of philanthropy, sacrificing immense interest to morality. With the happy memory of this boon to her subjects, Ranee Lakshmi Bai passed away in 1814.

Regency of Parvathi Bai.

During the minority of her son, her sister Parvathi Bai ruled as the Regent with marked ability for 15 years, during the first five of which Col. Munro continued to be Resident. It was during this period that the various Missionary agencies were, at his instance, permitted to settle in the country and were generously encouraged by substantial donations in money and land. Consistently with the scope given to Missionary enterprise for improving the condition of the Syrians, the oldest Christian

subjects of the State, the exaction of inam or free service from them in connection with Hindu festivals was put a stop to. Even after the relinquishment of the ministerial office, Munro guided the administration entirely till his departure in 1819. The people perpetuated Munro's memory by providing lights, called 'Munro lights,' at the dangerous creeks and crossings in the deep backwaters. If Macaulay admitted Travancore into the political system of the British protectorate, Munro approximated its government to the administrative system prevailing in British territory. Truly, therefore, the Munro period was *a period of transition.*

Rajah Rama Varma.

The regency of Parvathi Bai, which was marked by the removal of very many social disabilities and promotion of material prosperity, came to a close in 1829, when Prince Rama Varma attained his majority and was placed on the throne. The new king was an able ruler. He laid the foundation of the modern system of education by establishing an English school at Trivandrum in 1840. He took a most intelligent interest in science and other branches of learning and erected an Observatory. The removal of the Huzur cutcherry and other institutions from Quilon to Trivandrum, the improvement of the Nair Brigade, the abolition of the Huzur courts for the first time, the promulgation of a new law code on the model of the British system, the commencement of survey operations and the introduction of printing and lithography are some of the important measures of this reign. He was a very great scholar and linguist. He had extraordinary talents and a good taste for the fine arts, which he encouraged

greatly. He was a great poet and composed verses in Sanskrit, Malayalam, Telugu and Marathi.

Latter-day troubles.

But the latter part of his reign was not conspicuous for its success. This period as well as the first half of the reign of his successor was marked by administrative inefficiency and political folly. Reddy Row, the Mahratta scholar and accountant, whom Munro had employed to reorganize the financial branch of the administration, faithfully followed and fulfilled the principle and policy of his patron during his tenure of office as Dewan. The same policy was pursued by Dewan Venkata Row, who was considered to be 'a public servant of the first order,' and on whom, when he was appointed to the Mysore Commission, Lord William Bentinck conferred the title of Raya Raya Raya. With the advent of Cullen as Resident, everything began to go wrong. He wished to have things in his own way and strove to retain powers which could not be exercised consistently with his own position and the authority of the Rajah. The result was irreconcilable misunderstanding between the Rajah and the Resident. Dewans were made and unmade now as a concession to the Resident, and now as an assertion of the Rajah's authority. Each successive Dewan dug the grave of his predecessor, only to be swallowed up in turn by the intrigues of his successor. Thus there was no permanent Dewan for a long time.

The Resident's constant interference in internal affiars reached such a pitch that the Rajah felt that he was, as remarked by Sir William Denison, "like a tenant who, although he paid his rent regularly, was compelled at

cultivate his farm according to the will of his landlord," and once even went the length of declaring his intention to abdicate the throne. The minute issued by the Madras Government on the Rajah's complaint of his ill-treatment set things at rest for a time. But the Resident's hostile attitude continued till his own protege, Krishna Row, was put in as permanent Dewan.

Marthanda Varma.
A catastrophe threatened.

Soon after, the Rajah died and was succeeded by Marthanda Varma in 1847. During Krishna Row's effete administration, grave abuses prevailed: the police became inefficient and corrupt; the courts were venal and the salaries of the public servants and the subsidy to the British Government were not paid punctually. Monopolies dominated the revenue system, while expenditure was lavish. In 1855, the Madras Government, to whom the severe comments in the press and bitter complaints from the people against the Dewan and the Resident together disclosed the critical state of affairs, addressed the Government of India for the appointment of a commission of inquiry. But Lord Dalhousie sounded his warning note of annexation from the heights of Ootacamund, where he happened to be at the time. Accordingly, the Madras Government wrote: "It had become the duty of the Government to call the Rajah's attention, in the most serious manner, to the manifold abuses prevailing in his dominions; to urge an enlightened policy and to warn him that it was to be feared that the contingency against which article 5 of the Treaty was directed was not far distant unless averted by timely and judicious reform." The

Rajah, who was filled with consternation and dismay, took immediate steps to avert the impending danger. Meanwhile, the Court of Directors insisted on the appointment of a commission of inquiry into the affairs of Travancore, which the Government of India were not then in a position to do, on account of the outbreak of the Great Indian Mutiny. In Travancore the difficulty was solved by the timely death of Dewan Krishna Row and the compulsory retirement of General Cullen, to whom Sir Charles Trevelyan wrote thus: "It is my earnest desire to support the just authority of the Maha Rajah in his ancient dominions, and I know what is due to yourself as an old and a deserving officer of this Government. But the case now before me is one in which the claims of public duty are of the most imperative kind, and I must therefore desire that you will, without further delay, yield obedience to the repeated orders which have been conveyed to you."

It was at this critical juncture that Madhava Row was placed at the head of the administration in 1858.

MODERN TRAVANCORE.

A progressive era.

The commencement of this period from the middle of the nineteenth century was marked by a crisis quite analogous to the one at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Col. Munro assumed the duties of the Dewan conjointly with his own as Resident. This epoch covers a period of progress which takes us to the preser day. It comprises the reigns of the three sovereigns who have been officially recognized as Maharajahs by the Paramount Power; and, as such, constitutes a distinct

period noted for its high-water mark of Indian statesmanship. There is a similarity among Sir Rama Varma I., the first Maharajah, his successor Sir Rama Varma II. (the late Maharajah,) and his successor Sir Rama Varma III., the present Maharajah. Under a successive line of able and distinguished Dewans, with whom these reigns are associated, the epoch is conspicuous for great measures of reform.

Memorable statesmanship.

To Sir T. Madhava Row, who was at the helm of the State in a grave crisis, the country is indebted for its present prosperous condition, as old Travancore was to Dalawah Rama Iyen in the early days of its territorial expansion under Rajah Marthanda Varma. He reorganized the public service and raised its tone and efficiency. He removed several fiscal restrictions and oppressive monopolies. He emancipated the peasantry and placed their small holdings on a level with the ryotwari lands of the East Coast. The proclamation which gave security of title and fixity of tenure has been rightly recognized as the Magna Charta of the ryots of Travancore. Likewise the Interportal Convention, he brought about, was a boon of the first magnitude to trade. He put down dacoity and depredations by the professional caste of thieves, by an efficient system of police. Revenue was duly collected. Expenditure was carefully limited and financial equilibrium was quickly restored within a couple of years. Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras, who visited Travancore at this time, was well impressed with the excellence of the administration under the new Dewan, and brought it to the notice of the Court of Directors. The peace of mind

which the enlightened policy of his Minister and its appreciation in England brought to the Maharajah was enhanced by the pleasure of the presentation of an ornamental belt, with gold embroidery, by Queen Victoria. Girdled thus with the badge of goodwill and approbation of the paramount power, Marthanda Varma died in 1860, and was succeeded by his nephew Rama Varma, who pursued a most liberal and enlightened policy.

Maharajah Sir Rama Varma I.
Title of Maharajah.

Hand in hand with the enlightened sovereign, Madhava Row brought his remarkable talents to bear upon every branch of the administration. Law courts were organized; jurisdiction over European subjects was won in favour of the local courts and the status of the Rajah as a sovereign-ruler was thus established. Magisterial powers were conferred on divisional officers. Heavy import duties were abolished. Excise rates were reduced. Public buildings were reared. Bridges and canals were constructed. Forests were reclaimed; waste lands were cultivated and new industries encouraged. The disabilities of the Christian converts in regard to costume, right of way and title to succession were removed. The public service was thrown open to all classes of people, without distinction of caste or creed. In fact, every subject of the realm was "provided within a couple of hours journey with the advantages of a doctor, a schoolmaster, a judge, a magistrate, a registering officer, and a postmaster." From the wretched position which threatened annexation at every moment, Madhava Row, by his wonderful genius and administrative talents, raised the country to the proud

position of a model State. This attracted the attention of the Paramount Power, who, in recognition of such statesmanship, officially conferred upon the ruler the title of Maharajah, and knighted both himself and his eminent Minister. In this state of prosperity, Madhava Row left the country for good in 1872, owing to a grave misunderstanding between him and the Maharajah. The people of Travancore have gratefully erected a statue of Sir Madhava Row under the shadow of the public offices, which he built and in which he rendered such magnificent services to the country and the people.

"A model Native State."

Seshaiah Sastri, who succeeded him in the office of Dewan, succeeded likewise to the distinction he had left behind. He continued the policy of Sir Madhava Row in every respect. He improved the salaries of public servants. The use of paper introduced by Madhava Row was extended to all departments. He introduced a uniform system of weights and measures, constructed a network of branch roads and canals, completed tunnel works, towers of temples, the Napier Museum and the present college building. He added the law classes as a branch to the Arts College. He spread elementary education by the introduction of a grant-in-aid system, and increased the number of taluk and village schools. He caused the first systematic census of the country to be conducted simultaneously with the Census of India. He improved the religious and charitable institutions of the State. One of his beneficent acts, for which his name has been affectionately cherished, was the relief works that he opened for the famine-stricken immigrants, whom the Great Indian Famine of 1876–77 drove in thousands to this

land of charity. Among the important political events during his tenure of office was the visit of the Maharajah to Madras to meet the Prince of Wales, who had abandoned his proposed visit to Travancore. In his records of the Prince's tour in India, Dr. W. H. Russell, Private Secretary to the Prince, refers to the sovereign as an admirable man of business, to Seshaiah Sastri as a school-fellow of Madhava Row and as a man of great intelligence and ability, and to Travancore itself as a *Model Native State.* But the greatest political event during his regime was the celebration in 1877 of the historic assumption of the title of Empress of India by Queen Victoria. It was signalized by the presentation of an imperial banner emblazoned with the Rajah's arms and surmounted by the Queen's crown in token of her closer union and affectionate regard. This banner is to this day used on all State occasions as a symbol of the alliance and affinity existing between this State and the British Raj. Sir Seshaiah Sastri retired towards the end of 1877 to win fresh laurels in Pudukotah, as his distinguished predecessor had done in Baroda.

Nanu Pillai, who succeeded to the Dewanship, served the State well for three years, when his Royal master passed away. In announcing the ruler's demise the *Fort St. George Gazette* truly declared: "His reign has been marked by the development of wise and enlightened principles of administration, which have placed Travancore in the *first rank of Native States.*"

Maharajah Sir Rama Varma II.
Intensive Reforms.

His brother and successor Sir Rama Varma II. (Visakhom Thirunal) ascended the throne on the 17th

June 1880. He was a brilliant scholar in English and Sanskrit and a particular patron and promoter of education, progress and enlightenment. He came with quite an overwhelming passion for reforming the country, and wanted therefore a capable minister of attainments and aptitudes like his own. The choice fell on Ramiengar, (a distinguished officer of the British service and a renowned proficient and school-fellow of Sir Madhava Row and Sir Seshaiah Sastri) whom the sovereign had known before for proved ability and energy. The new sovereign and his minister eagerly set about remodelling the administrative machinery. Important reforms in the revenue, judicial, educational, police, medical and municipal departments of the State were introduced, and several works of public utility were carried out. The separation of the police from the magistracy was an important measure of reform effected, and was followed by a thorough reorganization of the police and by the wholesale adoption of the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code as legal enactments in the State. The civil laws too were consolidated and amended. But by far the most important administrative reform was a comprehensive and systematic scheme of revenue survey and settlement. Another event, which specially marked off the period, was the settlement of the long-pending boundary dispute between Travancore and Cochin with the British Resident as arbitrator. In the all-too-brief period of five years, the sovereign exerted an influence for good on the State, which was truly remarkable. His subjects enjoyed plenty and prosperity during his reign. He died in 1885 at the age of 48. In 1882 he was invested with the Knight Grant Commandership of the Most Exalted Order of the

Star of India, and almost all the scientific institutions of Europe showered honours on him. In fact, as remarked by Sir M. E. Grant Duff, "this ruler was the typical example of the influence of English thought upon the South Indian mind."

Maharajah Sir Rama Varma III.
An enlightened Ruler.

His nephew and namesake, the present ruler, whose title to the throne was duly recognized by the paramount power so far back as June 1880, when he had become the Heir-Apparent, ascended the Musnud on the 19th day of August 1885. In the splendour which covered the assumption of this high dignity, none realized better than himself the burden of sustaining the vast responsibility it involved. In his Installation speech he beautifully expressed his feelings thus:—"I little expected that at the early age of 28 I would be called upon to undertake the grave responsibilities of a ruler, and coming as I do after an illustrious line of nacestors—not the least eminent and wise of whom have been my two lamented uncles, His Highness the late Maharajah and his immediate predecessor—I feel all the more my own unworthiness to fill a position to which they have done so much honour. But while thus filled with a sense of my own incapacity, I must confess to a feeling of thankfulness that I see not a little in the circumstances in which I am placed, to encourage and cheer me. This ancient kingdom under the fostering care of my predecessors has entered on a career of material prosperity never before known; the finances are in a flourishing condition and the foundations of the future prosperity have been laid broad

and deep. I have therefore only to work on the lines chalked out for me: and in endeavouring to do this, it is no small consolation to me that I shall have the cordial aid and counsel of the British Representative at my court and the support and protection of the Paramount Power, to whose fortunes those of my House are, fortunately, indissolubly linked." From that day Sir Rama Varma has, under God's providence, happily completed 32 years of his benevolent reign and celebrated recently the Shasthipurti or the completion of the sixtieth year of his age. During this period, the country has advanced by giant strides.

Present-day progress.

The existence of several Arts Colleges and of a Law College, the establishment of a Training College for teachers, the organization of a State Department to educate the people in theoretical and practical agriculture, the reform of the Industrial School of Arts, the maintenance of a Sanskrit College to represent the Oriental Faculty and of a Survey School for the benefit of the ryots, the extension of the scheme of public lectures with a view to the diffusion of expert knowledge all over the country, the dissociation of the Reformatory from the Jail, and the adequate provision in it for the reformation of the spoilt children of society, the provision made for free primary education, the institution of a generous scheme of scholarships, the provision of hostels for students, the improvement of the status and financial position of the professors and teachers and the creation of a Directorate to guide and control the educational forces of the State—all these prove beyond doubt that every facility which the practical sagacity of a sovereign can suggest is

being afforded for the intellectual development of the people. Again, by the steps taken to organize Co-operative Credit Societies and to establish Village Panchayats, by the separate establishment of a Department of Industrial Survey, by the remission of several obnoxious taxes, by the equitable settlement of the long-standing disputes between landlords and tenants in a manner satisfactory to both, by the speedy completion of the Revenue Survey and assessment and by several other measures, the interests of the rural population have been considerably advanced. Besides these, several public works designed for the protection and promotion of agriculture, such as the Kodayar Irrigation Project, the Erattakari Channel System, the Parur and Kaipuzhai Reclamation Schemes, the Kainagari and Pathenchira bunds, the restoration of the banks of several rivers, and the construction of bridges across a number of rivers, have also been carried out. Similarly, the installation of gas light at the capital, the introduction of the railway, the construction of the High Range road and the assignment of lands and concessions to planters, are equally noteworthy. Then again the organization of the Sanitary Department including vaccination, vital statistics, rural sanitation, and itinerant medical relief and the contribution of medical grants to hospitals, dispensaries, and native Vaidyasalas demonstrate how largely the health of the people is being promoted. And, above all, the establishment of the Legislative Council and the organizution and expansion of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, which has enabled the Government to consider important and intricate questions from all points of view including the popular view, mark the inauguration of an important era of constitutional ad-

vancement. Such are some of the several salient features of progress which the country has made.

Sir P. Rajagopalachari's views.

By a clear analysis of statistics for 28 years since the sovereign's accesssion to the throne, Sir P. Rajagopalchari has shown that the revenue and expenditure have more than doubled, that the expenditure on Medical and Sanitary departments has trebled and on Education more than trebled and the number of private schools has risen by nearly 50 per cent, while the total number of scholars has more than quadrupled and that there has been an increasing percentage of revenue expended in ways directly beneficial to the people. In his rapid review of the progress he truly observes.—"The great extension of cultivation that has been taking place, the marked increase of the area cultivated with valuable crops, such as cocoanut, rubber, tea etc., the large increase of population, from 24 lacs in 1881 to over 34 lacs in 1911, the large increase in the public revenue, the large increase in trade, the flow of gold into the country, the improvement one sees all round in the standard of living, the better food eaten, the better clothes worn, and the better houses being built, the increasing indulgence in luxuries, the increasing value of land, the increase of prices and wages, the diminishing rates of interest: these. are not the symptoms of a decline in material well-being; and if there is any one thing, of which I am absolutely certain as a result of a somewhat careful study of Travancore conditions, past and present, as a result of inquiries personally made by me, it is this, that the State has during the period of His Highness's rule, advanced substantially in wealth."

Among the many salient directions of progress, the advancement of education stands foremost. There is less of illiteracy among His Highness's subjects than anywhere else in India, there being one school for every two square miles of area and 900 persons of the population. The organization of the new Industrial Department to exploit the resources of the country and the strenuous working of the Agricultural Department are calculated to solve the problem of the unemployed. But the problem of the unemployed 'literates' is taxing the energies of the Government more than ever before. The spirit of mutual sympathy and cordial fellowship among the several communities is the crying need of the hour. As observed by the late Dewan Sir P. Rajagopalachari, on the eve of his departure:— "What the people want is a strong government capable of gauging their wants correctly, willing to take adequate action towards the satisfaction of those wants and able to keep the balance even as between the different communities living in the State." The venerable Archdeacon Caley rightly remarks:— "Travancore does not need to be governed for the outside world but for itself. Its position is unique. It does not need to do everything that other places do."

Recapitulation.

The glorious record of progress so far achieved stands to the credit of a succession of enlightened rulers served by a noble band of able Dewans, who have acquired for themselves a name in history. This ancient land is a relic of the ancient Chera Empire. With the decay and dismemberment of that Empire, it was reduced in dimension to a few districts in modern South Travancore. Some

of the early sovereigns extended it eastward. The most dominating feature of the time was the influence of the Ecclesiastical Councils and the Village Assemblies. The popular influence reached its high-water mark in the historic session of the Assembly at Kodanallore, which resulted in the issue of the People's Charter of Rights. Its influence came to be overborne by the aggressive advent of the Pandian Chief and by the insurrection of the Pillamars. The Ettu Veettu strove hard for the extirpation of the Royal House, and for their own domination and brought the country to the verge of destruction.

Marthanda Varma, the maker of Modern Travancore, owed his conquest and consolidation of the Kingdom to the wonderful genius and talents of the soldier-statesman, Dalawah Rama Iyen. Dalawah Subbier completed the work of Dalawah Rama Iyen and secured the country against foreign foes. Dalawah Marthanda Pillai brought about the Triple Alliance with the neighbouring States. By his statesmanship and noble services, Raja Kesava Das secured the alliance of the Paramount Power and repulsed the attacks of Tippu. Dewans Velu Thampi and Omminy Thampi drove the State to the verge of political extinction, from which Col. Munro rescued it and built up the administration on the British pattern. Raja Sir T. Madhava Row likewise arrested a similar catastrophe caused by the maladministration of Dewan Krishna Row, and by his own administrative triumphs gained for it the proud distinction of a Model State. Sir Seshaiah Sastri completed the work of Sir Madhava Row; and Nanu Pillai's administration was known for its financial prosperity

Ramiengar infused into it new elements of progressive activity. He and his successors, who have served the present Ruler, have made a distinct mark on the progressive advancement of the country. Ramiengar was the father of Revenue Survey and Settlement. Rama Row created the Legislative Council, the first of the kind in the Native States of India, and thus introduced the popular element into the administrative machinery. Shungarasubbier laid the foundation of the present Educational code and extended the scope for popular voice by the institution of Educational Boards and Town Improvement Committees which, when the new Municipal Bill becomes law, will have enhanced the people's powers in respect of civic administration. Krishnaswamy Row improved the excise system and started technical institutes and foreign scholarships. V. P. Madhava Row's name will ever be associated with the inauguration of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly and the introduction of the British system of accounts. Gopalachari signalized his short regime by his Forest policy, which brought in a large revenue to the country. Sir P. Rajagopalachary, whose activity was many-sided, contributed materially to the creation of national life and the rapid growth of public spirit, by the political education of the people in the Popular Assembly, by his policy of uplifting depressed communities and by improving the status and economic welfare of other communities by social legislation of far-reaching importance. Dewan Bahadur Krishnan Nair, the present Dewan, has been developing the spirit of nationalism created by his predecessor.

Under the influence of the democratic spirit of the age, we have thus on the one hand the Popular Assembly, the Legislative Council, the Town Improvement Committees, etc.,—institutions which directly associate the people with the administration of the country and have a vital bearing on the future of the State. Under the influence of ancient traditions we have, on the other hand, the ancient Ecclesiastical Council of Eight and half, still governing the religious institutions of the country. Rooted in reverence for the past, the Ruler works the ancient institutions in the ancient spirit. The sexennial ceremony of Murajapom now being celebrated is a memorable instance in point. Imbued with the present-day progressive ideas of the West, he works the modern institutions in the modern spirit. The outstanding feature of the double side of the system of administration is that it eschews the evils incidental to either and combines the advantages of both. The policy is to encourage nationalism which, however, as Sir Charles Lucas says, "breeds at once content and discontent; content because the people have so much their own way; discontent because, having so much, they have not more. Discontent is synonymous with life. It means the perpetual desire to move on; it does not necessarily imply fault in the system or the policy; but it is the outcome of the system and the policy, because by encouraging education and enlightenment it has called forth new desires and wakened a new sense of life."

Thus whatever view we may take of the position which the Maha Raja occupies to day, whether we con-

sider the venerable antiquity of the Royal House to which he belongs, or the illustrious character of the ancestors from whom he takes his lineage, or the staunch and steady allegiance to the British Raj, or the progress achieved under its fostering care, or the devout attachment of the people to the Ruler of Travancore, in return for the manifold blessings they enjoy under his peaceful reign, or the recognition and reward he has received from the Paramount Power or his admirable personal traits, the position of the Maha Raja is uniqe.

POST-SCRIPT.

PROBLEMS OF THE DAY.

The Democratic spirit.

Since writing the above, three years have passed and the six years of Dewan Krishnan Nair's administration have come to a close. They synchronised with the great world-war. With the restoration of peace, a great change is coming on in the world. We are passing through a big transition. War or no war, this transition was coming on. The war itself was not a thing of momentary origin. It is a significant summary of a long course of human history, marking a point to which the course of material development had brought us. It is necessary to recognise the new force at work——a force not known before; and this force is transferring powers to the people. This advance is not one confined to any particular country or community. It is the common spirit of the age. It cannot be analysed. It sweeps over the whole world and stares us in the face. Travancore, among the rest, cannot stand still or unaffected by the controlling spirit of the

times. Whatever may be the constitutional position which the New Reforms may assign to the Native States, Popular Government is the ideal both in them and in the body politic of the British Empire of which they form an integral part. The voice of the governed is the keynote of the British policy and this policy has been magnanimously propounded and pursued by advanced Indian Rulers like the Travancore Maharaja who, for instance, was the first to inaugurate the Legislative Council in the Indian States. This circumstance is an augury of the gradual consummation of our progress towards Popular Government. There is absolutely no conflict of interests between the rulers and the ruled in the Indian States. The rulers themselves have no vested interests apart from those of their subjects. Hence Indian Rulers are able to carry out more easily in their own States a policy to which British Rulers are committed by the Reform Act.

Its danger.

The danger however of popular institutions in Indian States lies in a different direction. The States are not impregnated with real public life and political associations. Consequently, they mimic the strife of Parliament and copy the methods of civic life with no relation to fundamental facts of life. Our politics are therefore mere gossips about persons and paragraphs, about a few appointments and not a few disappointments. They are not matters of trained and continued interest. The Assembly continues to betray the danger of divergent class interests. Sir P. Rajagopalachari has truly foretold :—"This is the most pressing problem——how to make the different sections of the people trust one

another more largely than what they do now, how to make them co-operate more largely for the common good, and how to make them ignore small points of difference and realise the essential solidarity of interests in all main matters." A glance at the actual state of affairs—not through the medium of prepared pages of official reports or printed panegyrics of partisans—will at once reveal that the policy pursued by Dewan Krishnan Nair had a tendency to create jealousies and hatreds and accentuate differences in daily life and foment party polemics. Look at his re-constitution of the Legislative Council. The dissatisfaction was not at the slow pace of the reform, which is the main cause of discontent in British India, but at the measure being decidedly retrogressive, in that it took away, from the council, power which the ruler had once vested in it and which it had been exercising all along for over quarter of a century. Mr. E. J. John reflects only public opinion when he avers that "we had something of the real thing under the old law and that what we have under Regulation I of 1095 is the shade of a shadow."

Its hope.

It has been said that after all institutions are by themselves nothing. What matters is the men that work them. The same institutions may be worked differently under different heads. Sir P. Rajagopalachari says:—"The constitution of a Native State is essentially autocratic and in the last resort, the wishes of the ruler should prevail over everything else......Any development which the Assembly and the Council may have will have to be a development in harmony with the constitution

and tradition of the State." However, the Maharajah who has done so much may be trusted to give his people an effective share in the administration as years roll on.

The Land problem—its three-fold aspect.

Next in importance to the constitutional question, there is no problem which touches the people more closely or at so many points as the Land Revenue administration. This is the perennial problem which, from the first, every administrator has had to face. At one time it presented itself as an ecclesiastical necessity; at another period, as an agrarian necessity; and at a third period, as a political necessity—but at all times as a necessity too imperative to shrink from. The problem has three distinct phases—one affecting the people as the holders of devaswom lands; another affecting the people as the holders of jenmam lands; and a third affecting the people as the holders of Sirkar lands.

On the Devaswom side, Col. Munro inaugurated an important policy which, by incorporating Devaswom lands with sirkar lands, enfranchised Devaswom ryots. With respect to jenmom lands, Sir Madhava Rau caused a protective Proclamation to be promulgated which, by securing permanent occupancy right and fixity of tenure, enfranchised the jenmom tenants. Now from the difficulty of accepting the logical and legal consequence of Munro's assumption of Devaswom lands proceeds the Devaswom problem. The main problem is connected with the real character of the relation of Devaswom lands with the Sirkar. The vital question is whether the properties of sirkar devaswoms stand

on the same footing as sirkar lands of similar tenure; and whether rights of alienation of property possessed by holders of devaswom lands are identical with the rights of the holders of sirkar lands of a similar tenure, in the face of the High Court rulings to the contrary. Another difficulty is connected with the consideration whether the trustee of a charity can validly alienate trust property unless it can be for the direct benefit of the institution. A third element that has rendered the conderation of the question emergent is the disadvantages which the non-Hindu and non-caste people labour under, by being shut out from the ranks of the Land Revenue Department, with which the Devaswom administration has been inextricably linked. These are the main aspects that the land problem presents for solution on the devaswom side and Krishnan Nair has wisely kept his hands away from things which he did not understand or could not solve.

The jenmom side of the land problem received a certain measure of attention at his hands by the appointment of a commission for the purpose. The report of the Commissioner elicited severe disapproval both from the public and the Press. The Commissioner travelled back to historic origins and came to the curious finding that the jenmies (Nambudiries) were historically the lineal discendants of the Coast fisherfolk! It took Krishnan Nair three years to find out this objectionable deviation from the object of the Commission and the only action taken by him was to expunge the objectionable portion and leave the main matter severely alone for his successor to take up.

In regard to the Land Revenue side as between the sirkar and the ryots, there is the fatal flaw which perpetuates those very anomalies of the old ayacut, which it was the object of the new settlement to remove but which, in its hurry to achieve results, it copied closely. In consequence, the land tax is far from uniform and excessive. The land revenue administration has fallen into utter disorder. The Revenue Manual, though a voluminous and valuable compilation, no more represents the actual administration as provided therein, than the deflections which the special officer appointed to scrutinise its practical working has been able to discover. The Revenue Department has been never guilty of disposing of yearly work in connection with land occupation. Sir James Thomson once felt that it had reached such a pitch that the department was utterly powerless to fully deal with it. In his view, the Proverthicars were by general consent unfit for due village oversight. A link was required between them and the Tahsildar, and he considered the latter untrained in and neglectful of their full revenue duties. Sir John David Rees found fraud and complications over landholding and advocated the necessity for extended cultivation and for allowing full freedom to cultivators and for a re-adjustment of taluks. Mr. G. T. Mackenzie too said that the state of affairs was not creditable and would not be tolerated in any British district and warned that this blot ought not to remain upon the administration. Sir F. Nicholson considered it essential to good administration, both fiscally and economically, that Puduval should be disposed of not later than the close of the year. The result of the delay is not merely that accumulated assessment is demanded in a lump——

a grave economic and agrarian error——but that plots of land, once a waste, are worked up by labour and capital into fertile homesteads before a title-deed is issued. The consequences are obvious where rich and poor are neighbours. Witness the tragedy of the murder of the Tahsildar of Nedumangaud, in which a course of official ostracism in registering puduvals and in fixing ground value and tree value had culminated.

The Forest question.

The forest policy of Krishnan Nair, which has been of a piece with his land policy, leaves alike a good deal to be desired. Sir James Thompson thought that the removal of trees was in excess of what the forests could properly afford, while, outside teak plantations, practically nothing was being done towards recuperation. He urged the necessity for improved land revenue and forest administration. Sir J. D. Rees truly observed: "Travancore is favoured above most other countries with an abundance of superb forest; and yet there is no reason to believe that inordinate felling is less undesirable here than elsewhere!" He felt confident that some limit should be imposed, if only from climatic considerations, to the reckless alienations of former years, which however, like Tennyson's brook, still go on for ever. He strongly advised that Travancore should keep a firm hold over its forests and not lightly allow vague or speculative claims to prevail or excessive alienations to be made. Many another Resident was convinced that both authorised and unauthorised felling of timber occurs to a far larger extent. The most pressing needs are the energetic extension of reservation, the large outlay on forest communication and the exploita-

tion of forest produce. Disafforestation for the purpose of extending cultivation can neither work well nor go far towards the improvement of paddy growth or food supply. A European officer of considerable experience once said that the dread which the cultivators have of the fever, which is in fact mostly malignant, and the extreme improbability of settling there and the possibility of the lands going out of their hands were hardly appreciated at Trivandrum.

Financial policy.

Apart from this disafforestation, sale of sirkar lands, of forest coupe, of tank-beds, paduval registration, more tax on salt, new tax on tea—all this was resorted to for a show of surplus revenue on which the credit of an administration was supposed to rest. As observed by Mr. R. A. Graham, "Krishnan Nair had to succeed an officer of great experience and one may imagine that he had a very strenuous time in grappling with the problems of administration. His difficulties would have been great *in any case* but they have been increased not long after he assumed control, by the outbreak of the war." On the one hand he had to struggle through the economic tension brought on by the war; he had, on the other hand, to struggle to sustain the high pitch of administration reached by his distinguished predecessor. From the outbreak of the war up to the declaration of peace in 1919, Travancore took her share in bearing the common burden and helping the cause of the Empire and Lord Pentland gratefully acknowledged "the very ample and generous assistance and support given to the Empire in its time of stress."

His opinion was that "Travancore had done herself credit in the matter of recruiting." Notwithstanding war contributions, the financial transactions showed a surplus every year except during the first. Apart from the expansion of revenue in several directions, as the result of the efficient and effective reform of the revenue-yielding departments by Rajagopalachari, which made the Madras Government to see no reason to fear that the balancing of the revenue and expenditure of the State would present any difficulty for long, the increase of duty on salt and the imposition of export duty on tea from 1916, no less than the sale of lands and reckless alienations spoken of above, account for the surplus of revenue. The tendency to claim credit on large balances did not seem to have left its fascination for Krishnan Nair, notwithstanding the hope of the Governor-in-Council that the abandonment of the policy of hoarding balances would mark the commencement of a new era in Travancore. In regard to provisions from the revenues of the State to useful productive works, one of the Residents has remarked: "Provided there are sufficient guarantees that largely increased expenditure is devoted to useful ends and properly supervised, there is no need to be afraid of the figures." Though the presumption is that the Durbar has satisfied itself that there has been no waste that could be avoided by continual check and supervision and by extended touring on the part of the officers, he was inclined to think that "a disposition to comply with applications for increase of pay and establishments is a factor in the increase!" He thought the staff was "too large for a state of the size of Travancore." He also opposed "the existing scale of

expenditure on buildings which appears to be lavish and in many cases unremunerative." Thus the directions of outlay were questionable, while the expenditure itself was extravagant.

Economic situation.

Notwithstanding such lavish expenditure, nothing was appreciably done to ease the economic situation brought on by the food-crisis, which arose with the commencement of the war. Facilities for the import of paddy and rice from outside the State were conspicuous by their absence. The rise in prices of the necessaries of life was abnormal. Inaccessibility to foreign markets pressed hard on commercial products such as Copra and Coir. The situation became very grave and caused no small distress to the people in general and to the poor in particular. Food control helped only the officers more than the people. The poor suffered untold misery. This is the bare fact, despite that from the show he had of the rice-distributing centre, prepared by the previous intimation of his visit, Mr. T. E. Moir was pleased to see in it "a model of what such a centre should be." No doubt measures of relief might read well on paper but they failed to ease the economic tension to any palpable extent. This cannot be sufficiently deplored when it is borne in mind that during Sir Seshaiah Sastri's time, the great Indian famine of 1876 which affected British India, drove people from there to Travancore for relief. Travancore maintained them for several months, housing them, giving provisions, clothing and medical treatment, at immense cost. During Ramiengar's time there was scarcity of food. The rain-fed irrigation tanks were all thrown open for repair and renovation in order to find food and wages for the poor who could work

But the tank beds, which alone could supplement the increasingly inadequate supply of water from irrigation project works, came to be sold during Krishnan Nair's time in order to show surplus revenue when people were on the verge of starvation, depriving them at the same time of water from tank beds when after the bad time is over they turn to cultivate their own fields. What an irony of fate that Travancore, which could help India in seasons of scarcity, was helpless to save her own children when the wolf was at their doors and the State is not yet free from distress.

In this matter, no creation of an Industrial Directorate or founding of industrial museums or bureaus or of demonstration farms or depots can have now or will have in future any potentiality, unless brought into practical relationship with the active and actual life of the people. Leaflets in the Gazette are only like copy-book maxims recalling the Miltonic leaves that strew the brooks of Vallambrosa, especially to the "not in-experienced and not unsuccessful cultivators." The ryots can ill afford to flirt with costly and leisurely experiments. And after all, as remarked by Sir John David Rees, "it can hardly be necessary to prove that plantains grow successfully in Travancore" or for the matter of that the domestication of bees will, in the words of the *Madras Times,* be a valuable industry to the many poor and a healthy pastime to the richer classes. The rush of the co-operative movement without real unity of feeling or availability of unpaid work is no more a pious paper-measure than the grant of lands for cultivation without any provision against their alienations. Such things cannot take the masses far.

The condition of the classes is no better. The education they receive may be presumed to develop their personality and to enable them to derive from such personality a certain destiny in life. It is true that 140% of literacy is often proclaimed in official papers and paraded before the public eye; but it is still a moot question how to reconcile this 140% of literacy which places Travancore in the van of educational progress with "half-educated and underfed failures" so pathetically pitied by Krishnan Nair in some of his public utterances. Success in examination is no success in life. Those who pass are qualified for nothing save for low-paid clerkships in subordinate ranks. Ancestral and other professions are closed to them as much as the higher ranks. Either eternal subordination or enforced descent into the lower strata of society is their fate. Failure in examination is equal to failure in life. The failures are a legion——a distinct menace to society. No Native State ought to tolerate such wastage. From Robert's free School to the Vanchyoor High School and from the Vanchyoor High School to the Maharajah's College, the progress may be depicted in sounding rhetoric and polished periods but the literate unemployed struggle alike to keep the wolf from the door as their illiterate confreres do.

The problem of the depressed classes is too well-known to be at the root of inter-racial and inter-caste bitterness. There is a considerable volume of discontent everywhere among the several sections of the people who are rent by party disputes and personal interests which are merely naked class struggles waged on economic lines.

The Need of the Hour.

The test of administration is: "Is the condition of the people anywhere better than before?" If not, the head of the administration ought to deem it as opportunity lost, duty neglected. The six years of Krishnan Nair's administration have been in his own words 'years of storm and stress, doubt and difficulty, anxiety and apprehension' and good reason had he 'to bid farewell with an aching heart.' The country requires now, more than ever before, the faculty to rise above the petty limitations of office routine and administrative drudgery to higher phases of thought which are the birthright of real statesmen: attention to larger and lasting issues: and wholesome influence in shaping the course of public events—not to waste time and energy in narrower efforts! Organic growth of the entire body and not of any particular limb is the crying need—to see the bud in seed, the flower in bud, the fruit in flower. No touch-and-go method, nor dainty word-device will ever do. To begin at the salient aspects of things as a whole in new unexpected ways, in new lights, in altered perspective, in fresh connection and combination with the controlling spirit of the times—this is real, first class statesmanship that is now and always a guarantee of our being ourselves. It alone will furnish a commanding personality around whom the divergent forces can gather to get inspiration and leadership. We want such a man who can give such a focus to the nation in its need—a man to whom facts are sacred, principles are sacred and the honour of the nation is sacred and who on no account will therefore decline to right wrongs by whomsoever inflicted or wheresoever found to exist.

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